

**MILITARY CHAPLAINS'**

**REVIEW**

**1976**











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## REVIEW



FALL, 1976





## PREFACE

The *Military Chaplains' Review* is designed as a medium in which those interested in the military chaplaincy can share with chaplains the product of their experience and research. We welcome articles which are directly concerned with supporting and strengthening chaplains professionally. Preference will be given to those articles having lasting value as reference material.

The *Military Chaplains' Review* is published quarterly. The opinions reflected in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Chief of Chaplains or the Department of Army.

Articles should be submitted in duplicate, double spaced, to the Editor, Military Chaplains' Review, United States Army Chaplain Board, Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, New York 10305. Articles should be approximately 8 to 18 pages in length and, when appropriate, should be carefully footnoted.

### EDITOR

Chaplain (LTC) John J. Hoogland May 1971—June 1974

Chaplain (LTC) Joseph E. Galle III July 1974—September 1976

Chaplain (LTC) Rodger R. Venzke October 1976—

## UNDIQUE VENIMUS

Among the myriad of unit crests in the U.S. Army is one emblazoned with the Latin motto: *undique venimus*. When times were bad because of equipment failure, the chaplain of that unit jested that the phrase meant: "We come apart in many places." Actually, the phrase means: "We come from many parts," or better, "We have come from every place."

That's an excellent motto for a unit of the U.S. Army. While it may have been chosen to emphasize the effectiveness of certain weaponry, the fact is that it says something far more significant about the personnel. Fortunately, as some writers have recently noted, the great "melting pot" of America was a myth. "We have come from every place," and each of us has made a unique contribution to a single nation. Various attempts to squeeze all Americans into a standard mold have been resisted regularly. As contradictory as it may sound, we have been united and strengthened by the richness of our diversity.

In the same vein, we would do well to recognize the potential of our religious pluralism. As Dr. John Mulder points out in this issue, "Religious freedom and the recognition of cultural diversity might free the church to measure American society rather than be swallowed up by it."

All of which serves as an introduction to this issue. You'll find no central theme this time. Each author brings to us a matter of information and concern from his perspective and, more importantly, from his experience. No matter that we may not agree with every maxim stated or every conclusion reached. The mere exposure to their perspective can broaden our insight, stimulate our curiosity, and encourage our quest for a better understanding of ourselves and those we serve. In Dr. Bertram Atwood's words from his inclosed article, "The preacher isn't around to answer questions nobody today is asking. Rather, he is to ask the right questions."

I want to use this space also to express my personal thanks to Chaplain (LTC) Joseph E. Galle III who served as the editor for our journal since July 1974. His own outstanding talents as a writer, demonstrated by the reprint of his award-winning article in this edition, made him a capable collector of stimulating works from which we all benefited.

While I wish Joe success in his new assignment, I also welcome Chaplain (LTC) Rodger R. Venzke, our new editor. At the same time, let me repeat the invitation of our preface, encouraging each of you to continue to share the products of your experience and research. We wear the same uniform and are assigned to the same branch, we worship the same God and serve the same nation. Still we are individuals,

wonderfully unique—each possessing some special insight from which the other can profit.

Our nation's motto, *e pluribus unum*, necessarily stresses the union of our various states, but it does not cancel the potential of our personal diversity. Much of our strength and hope for the future is still soundly based in the fact that, *undique venimus*, "We have come from every place."

ORRIS E. KELLY  
Chaplain (Major General), USA  
Chief of Chaplains

**HEADQUARTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Washington, D.C., *Fall* 1976**

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## IN THIS ISSUE

"I've come to see that before my wife was a wife, a mother, a companion, and a homemaker, she was and is a person."

——Joseph E. Galle, III

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"For centuries past, *the* distinguishing mark of . . . most Christians has been reverence in church. The present urging towards a balanced recognition of God and one's fellowman is combatting a cultural trend of centuries."

——Edmond J. Speitel

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"Ours is a time of grief with all its ambivalent emotions: anger at the faltering Dream, and anger at those who announce that it's faltering. That's why we must deal carefully with each other."

——John C. Raines

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"A Bicentennial celebrated in the midst of confusion and uncertainty was strikingly faithful to the 'Spirit of '76.' "

——John H. Mulder

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"I believe it can be demonstrated clinically that what most people call 'God' is nothing more than their Parent Ego State."

——Eugene E. Allen

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"The plight of so much preaching in our day is . . . that we preachers too often give the impression that a sermon is expected to be dull, or moralistic, or safe."

——Bertram deH. Atwood



# LIBERATION BEGINS AT HOME

Chaplain (LTC) Joseph E. Galle III

A year ago I wouldn't have admitted that I am a chauvinist. Surely I—an open-minded, fair husband and father—didn't hold oppressive attitudes toward *women*. But I did hold them, and to an embarrassing extent still do, toward the woman I love—my wife.

To set the record straight, I was not fanatically devoted to masculinity, nor had I assumed an anti-feminist posture. To the contrary, my relationships with women—at the office, at church, in the neighborhood—were open and accepting. I was not uninformed. I'd read Robin Morgan's *Sisterhood is Powerful* and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, and also *Ms. Magazine* and numerous articles about the Woman's Movement. Attraction to the goals of feminism prompted me to attend several seminars and share my views with other males. I was "with it"—enlightened.

The movement, however, appeared to be "out there" somewhere. What a growing number of American women were demanding—a voice in society; power at home, on the job and in politics; dignity and respect; and the right to be persons who define themselves—seemed unrelated to my daily life and especially removed from our house.

I strongly suspect that's how a large number of American husbands feel today. Though informed, we remain somewhat untouched by it all, convinced that we are not chauvinists.

Perhaps we husbands need to question whether or not we have been liberated—set free from our chauvinistic and sexist attitudes. Since I thought I was already liberated, I assumed my attitude and behavior at home was OK and that my wife was a happy homemaker.

But as we began to discuss candidly our home life, she told me she had been angry and depressed often without knowing why. She said at one time she had been happy as a full-time homemaker. Then as she became more aware of the "housewife" role she had been forced to assume, she became resentful. That, in turn, detracted from her sense of personal satisfaction, not because she wanted to find excitement and glamour outside the home, but because she wasn't getting cooperation, consideration and respect in the home. Consequently, she felt she was being used. As her awareness of this heightened, so did her resentment, which made ripples and even waves on the smooth waters of our home life.

Our discussions continued and I learned that I wasn't a liberated

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Chaplain Galle, a Baptist minister, recently completed his assignment as Homiletics and Journalism Officer with the U.S. Army Chaplain Board and assumed his new duty as Division Chaplain, 2nd Infantry Division, Korea. He served as editor for the *Military Chaplains' Review* from July 1974 to September 1976. He has an M.A. in sociology from Long Island University and a Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary. The above article was awarded the Catholic Press Association's Journalism Award for the best treatment on Family Life in 1976.

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husband at all. That knowledge didn't develop, however, until a green parakeet, a brown dog and four bath towels brought to the surface what I had not been able to fathom before; that, like charity, liberation begins at home.

Two years ago we gave one of our sons a parakeet and a bird cage. He placed the bird in his room, studied a pamphlet about parakeet care, and regularly fed and watered the bird. After several months he lost interest in Pete the Parakeet. Then I began to hear his mother say, "Son, the bird needs water," and "Your room is filthy—feathers are all over the floor—vacuum!"

Time passed, I forgot about the bird until I heard her say, "The newspaper in Pete's cage stinks. I'm not going to change it this time. Pete's *your* bird, not mine!"

I learned that for more than a year she had been cleaning up Pete's mess while I had remained indifferent to the problem. I asked myself several questions: Why did my son expect his mother to clean up after Pete? Why didn't I insist he take care of Pete? Why didn't I think of doing it myself? Why *didn't* I do it?

As I sought answers, one fact became clear. Our son and I had a "Let-Mom-do-it" attitude. We presupposed that "cleaning-up-after-Pete" was her duty. Without asking her to do it, we had simply unloaded that distasteful task on her. That startled me. I allowed—even unquestioningly expected!—her to accept the role of "bird-dropping-cleaner-upper." That was strange behavior for a "liberated" husband who spoke out for women's rights.

I began to think of other household chores I and the rest of the family assumed were her duties:

—Shopping for groceries and putting them away. (We eat the food, don't we?)

—Cooking meals and washing greasy pots and pans and dishes. (We eat from the dishes, don't we?)

—Mopping and waxing the floors. (We dirty them, don't we?)

—Scrubbing the toilet bowl and tub. (We use them, don't we?)

The parakeet episode forced me to admit that I believed these chores to be "her" work—a chauvinist attitude, indeed!

While I was trying to sort out my feelings, the dog caught my attention. We've had Rocky—part Dachshund, part bulldog and part something else—for five years. He belongs to the family, but belongs to no one in particular when he needs to be walked. Almost nightly I heard my wife say, "All right, who's going to walk Rocky?"

One night after we were in bed, Rocky came into our room, placed his white paws on the bed, looked at my wife with his big brown eyes and whined. He was ready to go out. But why had he come to her and not to me? The answer was clear. Like "cleaning up after the bird," "walking the dog" had become her responsibility, too, and somewhere along the line Rocky had discovered that.



For almost five years—1,825 times—Rocky had repeated that performance. Yet I hadn't learned what it took the dog about a year to learn: I had elected my wife "chairperson" of the "take-the-dog-to-the-fireplug" committee. I wondered what would have happened if she hadn't walked Rocky. Poor Rocky. And poor living room rug, too.

One night I watched her fold bath towels—the fat, fluffy orange ones—and place them in the closet. The next morning the same towels were piled in the clothes hamper. Only one person—our third son—had showered the night before, and obviously he had used *four* towels! On seeing the towels, my wife exclaimed in exasperation, "I feel like a slave around here!" She asked our son how he could possibly have used so many towels. He replied, "I took two showers, one after the other."

"You took *two* showers? Even so, why *four* towels?"

"Because I don't like drying off with damp towels," he responded, surprised that his mother even questioned him about it. His attitude was: she washes them, I use them. It seemed inconceivable and a little frightening, but our home had become a place where I rested, the children played and she worked.

The bird, the dog, and dirty towels—like white blips on a green radar screen—showed me something I didn't want to see: that it had been easy to

1. take my wife for granted;
2. let her be taken for granted by the children;
3. expect her to perform nasty chores repetitiously;
4. act as if she existed only to take care of the house;
5. allow her to take total responsibility for housework;
6. perpetuate chauvinistic attitudes in the children;
7. remain blind for years to inequality in the house; and
8. do all of the above while professing to be a liberated husband.

There's truly a difference between enlightenment and liberation: one means *thinking* about it; the other means *doing* something about it. I've discussed human liberation with a number of husbands who advocate feminism, and I've found it's much easier for husbands to *discuss* liberation than to apply it. As long as males talk in general terms about "women's potential" and "equal rights," we fail to come to grips with the particulars that surround us daily and which cry out for our attention. Such an approach reduces liberation to a theory and keeps it at a safe distance where husbands don't have to make a personal effort to change.

In a recent group discussion, one woman said her husband keeps insisting that he wants her to be a person, an individual in her own right. She asked, "How can I be a person when I'm 'blessed' with five children and all the housework? How can I be 'free' when he never helps or offers to help me with all this responsibility? I know he thinks he means it when he says he wants me to develop my own potential, but he hasn't gone far enough in his thinking to realize the part he needs to play in my liberation."

*I've come to see that before my wife was a wife, a mother, a companion and a homemaker, she was and is a person.* She doesn't have to live within certain feminine roles. Her identity includes much more than motherhood or wifehood. I don't understand what all of this implies; neither does she. But we're working to grasp it better.

Here are several positive decisions we've made in our home which I've rephrased in the form of suggestions.

1. *Any family member can do housework.* Previously I'd seen housework as my wife's responsibility with other family members assisting her. I see now that any one of us can and should perform any household function. When one of the children asks, "But why should I do that?" I answer, "Because it needs to be done, that's why." For example, we take turns vacuuming, not to "help" Mom, but because the carpet is dirty.

2. *A sense of ownership is needed.* I wondered often why my wife didn't seem to appreciate my offer to wash the dishes. I know now that she didn't appreciate it because my attitude showed that I was doing her a favor; I was helping her with her dishes. The same was true of other chores either I or one of the children would occasionally do. We were saying to her, "I'll clean *your* windows, sweep *your* kitchen floor, set *your* table." We lacked a sense of ownership; it was *her* house, not ours. No wonder she didn't show appreciation!

3. *Mom is not the "bad-guy."* Since I perceived housework to be her responsibility, each time she needed help she had to ask for it. So when one of her requests inconvenienced us, she became the "interrupter-of-good-TV-shows," the "spoiler-of-fun" or the "complainer" even when she was doing something for our benefit.

She had tried to establish good work habits and a routine for the family but tired of having to "crack the whip" and more or less gave in to our indifference. It was startling how quickly the routine was established once I decided to support her.

4. *Excuses are just that—excuses.* All along I thought I was sharing the housework, but I've realized otherwise. Though I washed dishes, swept the floor, vacuumed, changed light bulbs, and picked up strewn clothes and magazines—I did that only when the mood hit me, or when she wasn't feeling well. (If housework had paid \$1 an hour, I doubt that I would have earned more than \$300 over the last 20 years!) Handy excuses exempted me: "I don't know how to cook" (neither did she when we married); "I can't shop because I can't find the groceries at the store", and "You can do certain chores so much better than I can."

It seldom, if ever, crossed my mind that since she had learned to cook and to do all of the tasks on that endless housework list, I could, too. The truth was that I wasn't interested. I didn't *want* to learn. I enjoyed being "helpless" and profited from it greatly. Now the children and I are learning.

5. *Watch the language.* Throughout their adolescence I heard our

older sons tell jokes portraying women as sex objects or as helpless, hysterical and humorous. Though I knew better, I told a number of such stories myself, all in good fun—I thought.

In addition, I'm sure I left the impression with my sons that there are two kinds of language: "man talk" and "woman talk." They learned that when they saw me leave the kitchen whenever a neighbor came to drink coffee with my wife. At the time I reasoned that the women might want privacy. The real reason was that I felt uncomfortable listening to "woman talk" which usually revolved around cooking, curtains, children and clothes. How I wish I could re-program our older sons' attitudes and language, but it's too late—they're away from home at college and on their own.

6. *Set the example.* I am trying to influence our two sons and a daughter who are still at home by cleaning up my language, washing away sexist slurs and stereotypes. Doing this is not difficult if I remember to think of men and women as *persons*, not as members of the opposite sexes.

TV proved helpful in this struggle. One evening a commercial portrayed a pre-adolescent stewardess serving a pre-adolescent jet-liner pilot his favorite cereal. The commercial prompted me to ask the children, "Why couldn't the girl be the pilot? After all, women have been flying planes for years." They readily agreed that women could be professional pilots; the boys, however, were slower to agree that men should be stewards.

Though these episodes have influenced me significantly—given me a new focus on housework and a sensitivity to language—I'm not kidding myself, I'm still a chauvinist, but an awakened one, thanks to Pete, who built a nest in my conscience; to Rocky, who taught me a new trick; and to those dirty towels, which enabled me to hang my own "wash" on the line and look at it.

According to the experts, liberation is a journey, not a destination. I find I have more questions than answers, more problems than solutions. Though I have a distance to go, I'm painfully aware that I'm on the way.



# THE SEARCH FOR A PERSONAL LITURGY

Chaplain (LTC) Edmond J. Speitel

You've entered an enormous church, elaborate, rich, artistic in decoration. A ceremony (Roman Catholic?) of some solemnity is in progress. You're not "up" on this sort of thing but you can't help but notice the bowing, kissing, incense, candles, and the ornateness of the vestments. Yes, it must be Roman Catholic. You're anxious to discover what is taking place; perhaps you'd like to participate. Yet, the language is unfamiliar. Is it Latin? Although the choir is singing and the organ is playing, there's little inclination to join in; the music is too elaborate, too complicated.

The priest, for the most part, has his back to you, his arms raised, almost defensively. And he's so far away! And yet praying in whispers! You notice that you and the others present are not encouraged to be aware spectators, let alone active participants. So remote, so arcane it all appears.

You are somewhat scandalized by the sermon. It was short and so "stereotyped." Did the preacher actually consider what he had to say important? It seems not. And how few of the congregation approached to receive Communion at that altar rail which served as one more barrier between priest and people! As if the language and distance and the elaboration of the ceremonial were not enough!

What a surprise when, during this liturgy, another priest with a young "server" came out to one of the many "side" altars of the Church and started what you later had identified as a private, "low" mass. Perhaps the few people who knelt by in silence knew and appreciated what was evolving, but perhaps not.

The site of this liturgy and liturgical context into which you have entered might have been St. Patrick's Cathedral, Manhattan, or St. Helena's Church, Philadelphia, or even, with modification in size and solemnity, the tiny mission church of Mooney Creek, Kansas, as late as 1964. Yet, it could also have been the Basilica of San Lorenzo Fuori Le Mura in Rome as early as 675, or Notre Dame de Paris in 1230. It might have been the Dom in Cologne or virtually any church or monastery in Christendom (later, Roman Catholic Christendom) from the 5th/6th century until the implementation of Vatican Council II's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," 1964.

You suspect, however, that the Christian Eucharist was not always this a-social, this formal, this totally vertical. Christ and his apostles had a rather quiet, comfortable "liturgy" at the Last Supper. The early Christians surely understood what was going on and were involved when they gathered to worship. Places of all kinds, living quarters,

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attics, storage buildings, even jails were used for their services. What is the explanation for this radical change from a knowing, active participation and involvement of the worshipers to the silent spectatorship you have here witnessed?

### Arianism

If you suspected a deep-seated, historical, maybe even doctrinal explanation, you're right! The rise of the teaching of Arius, 256–336 A.D., provides just such an explanation. It was the conviction and teaching of Arius that Christ was a created being, subordinate to the Father. Although the Council of Nicaea, 325, condemned this teaching as heretical by declaring that Christ is “. . . begotten, not made, one in being with the Father,”<sup>1</sup> that proclamation not only did not put an end to the controversy, it actually fanned its flames. By the time of the Synod of Toledo, 589, which effected a reconciliation between the “Arians” and the “Catholics,” more than half of Christendom had adopted Arian teachings.<sup>2</sup> This included Rome and the Italian Peninsula and also what is now Spain, France, and Great Britain, plus North Africa. Arianism was a vital element in Christian history and it remains so even today, at least through its influence on devotional and liturgical practice.

Yet, it was actually the *reaction* to Arianism that left its mark on the liturgy. Since Arianism denied the divinity of Christ, the church's response was an emphasis, indeed, an over-emphasis, on this divinity. This involved a downgrading, if not an implicit denial, of his humanity. Things got out of focus. Regard Christ too one-sidedly as God, and the next step is to consider that he came on earth primarily to be worshiped, rather than to lead us as our brother in worship of the Father. Christ as God is indeed worshipable, adore-able, yet it is as Redeemer that he is most obviously with us: “I stand in the midst of you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:27) This had been his stance in the liturgy; Christians pray “through Christ our Lord.” The Father is worshiped “with, in, and through” Christ. Yet, Christ the Priest gave way to Christ the “Consecrator.”

Godfrey Dieckmann must be quoted in this context:

I believe that this word [Consecrator] is critical. Christ is viewed primarily as God, the divine Consecrator who effects the holy Sacrifice through His ministers, the priests. The faithful felt themselves faced by infinitely awful reality—the stupendous fact that God immolates Himself for man. In a word, holy Mass is no longer understood as a common action of the people of God, with and through their priests, with and through the Church, with and through their High Priest, the Man-God, Christ—but a service at which God becomes present in their midst, through the ministry of His priests. The Mass is the action of God. Christ is regarded not so much our High Priest as the divine consecrator.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Josef A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* (New York: Benziger Bros., 1955) Vol. I. p. 463.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 469.

<sup>3</sup> *Come Let us Worship* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961) p. 11.

The next logical step was the clericalization of the mass. The ordained priests alone were considered as having a legitimate active role in that miracle which made God present on the altars. The canon or Eucharistic Prayer of the mass became, in a sense, a “Holy of Holies,” silent, mysterious, approachable only by the high priest. To rule out participation by other than the priest, an interpolation was actually made in the very text of that hitherto “unchangeable” canon. The first remembrance prayer formerly read: “*Qui tibi offerunt sacrificium laudis*” (“all those here present who offer you this sacrifice of praise”). When the faithful became mere on-lookers in worship this expression seemed too bold, or even untrue, so the words “*pro quibus tibi offerimus*” (“for whom we, your ministers, offer”) were introduced. This practical exclusion of the laity from participation in the liturgy first appeared around the year 800 and was quite universal by the tenth century.<sup>4</sup>

It might seem naive or overly simplistic to aver that this stress on the divinity of Christ in opposition to the Arian concept of Christ our brother was the “root of all evils” liturgically; yet it certainly made its imprint.

Several other anti-communal or anti-participatory liturgical trends could be “blamed” on the reaction to Arian thought. The mass became almost magical since it was quite clearly a work of God. Private masses were multiplied since, if one mass is so very valuable, logically, many more would be that much more valuable. Private devotion(s), either to Christ in the “Blessed Sacrament” or to the more “human” and thus more approachable saints, became ever more popular since, with the mass now between the priest and God, the lay person sought a legitimate outlet for his natural inclination to be personally involved in worship.

### Protestantism

It was with the debilitated and non-participatory, non-understood liturgy described above that Luther and the other sixteenth century reformers were familiar.

Firmed up over the centuries had been a mass almost totally priest-oriented, mostly silent, completely in Latin. By this time the people were no longer active in worship. Gregory Dix interestingly highlights this non-active stance by indicating that although those who were barred from Christian worship were formerly considered as “forbidden to offer,” they were by this time “forbidden to communicate,” or excommunicated, a passive or receiving concept.<sup>5</sup> The scriptures were seldom explained to the people since the sermon had become unimportant, if not a rarity. With the grandiose emphasis on Christ’s divinity, the cult of Mary and the saints became increasingly overstressed since,

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<sup>4</sup> Jungmann. *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 83.

<sup>5</sup> *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945) p. 436.

as mentioned above, the saints, in contrast to the awesome Christ-God, were “approachable.” Private devotions, many bordering on the superstitious or even the idolatrous, fulfilled the layman’s need for pious activity. As the reception of Communion decreased almost to the point of extinction, the people’s efforts to gaze upon the Host, termed *Corpus Christi* (Body of Christ) piety, have become legendary and alternately the subject of amusement or scandal.<sup>6</sup> Examples of these would be the crowds pressing to view the Sacred Host carried in procession, the extravagance and popularity of the devotion called “Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament,” and the introduction of the dual elevation at mass. The scriptural doctrines of the Church as the Body of Christ and, perhaps more importantly, that of the Priesthood of the Laity, had become obscured and practically denied.

This was the state of Eucharistic liturgy and piety that prevailed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. With the retrospective glance that history allows, it might be said that those who later became known as Protestants indeed had legitimate complaints about the lack of aware, participatory worship. Also most disturbing to the Germanic peoples was the “Romanization” of the church in general and of the liturgy in particular. Yet, history also recognizes that the reformers took rather radical steps in their attempts to effect change. Dix, a Protestant scholar, recognizes

. . . the force of a single idea carrying the who protestant movement forward with an impetus sufficient to overcome the strength of tradition, the resistance of sincere opponents and critics and even the mistakes and faults of the Reformers themselves.<sup>7</sup>

That “single idea” was “the conception of a personal relation of each individual soul to God.”<sup>8</sup>

Dix most interestingly points out that although this notion of the individual’s relationship to God was not liturgically expressed (or expressable?), it was not truly ignored in medieval Christian practice. He cites, as an example, the multiple private devotions and the emphasis on personal sacramental confession. But, the fact that it was denied practical expression in the Eucharistic liturgy, the “vital act” of the church’s life, is what gave the reformers “such explosive force.” This force

swept this [the liturgy] ruthlessly away. And it proceeded to sweep after it just those elements of catholic tradition which stood in the path of its most extreme and unbalanced expression—the idea of the church as the sphere of redemption, the sacraments as effectual signs of grace, and with these the doctrines of the apostolic ministry and the communion of saints.<sup>9</sup>

The Protestants reacted to over-ritualization, the lack of preaching,

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<sup>6</sup> Dieckmann *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Dix. *op. cit.*, p. 637.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 638.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*



and the emphasis on the ordained priesthood. In so doing they stressed Sacred Scripture, denied the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, and in abolishing the ministerial priesthood, highlighted the general priesthood. Yet the original Protestants maintained considerable ritual. It took a second reform movement, that of the Separatists, to attack this formality.

The situation was not unlike that which took place in the wake of the Arian dispute; it was the *reaction* that firmed up non-participation. The Church again over-reacted, became even more cautious and defensive, played down that which was emphasized by the protestors, and thus delayed for centuries truly needed reform. So much stress was placed on the Divine institution of the sacrificing priesthood and so little attention given to the priesthood of the baptised that this latter scriptural tenet was all but denied. In the process, the idea and ideal of active participation of the laity in the life and worship of the church continued to be obscured, in effect denied.

The Council of Trent, 1570, eliminated some abuses and superstitions that had developed in the mass, but provided neither for participation nor for a better understanding of the true nature of Eucharistic celebration. The liturgy remained in Latin. The purposes of the Tridentine counter-reformation, liturgically, were mostly negative: "To suppress abuses and excessive diversity that were found in the deteriorated liturgies of the west."<sup>10</sup> The Roman Missal of Pius V (1604), indirectly a product of the Council, with few exceptions remained the basic mass text from that time until Vatican II.

In the intervening centuries the split in Christendom was more emphasized than ameliorated. Although there were frequent, if unheeded, urgings towards reform, little change was effected until Vatican II's celebrated *Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy*, Protestants have researched the same liturgical sources and have come up with an almost identical *Shape of the Liturgy* and kindred ideals of participation.<sup>11</sup> Few Christians, Protestant or Catholic, would argue with these relevant citations from Vatican II:

1. This sacred Council has several aims in view: it desires to impart an ever increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful . . . to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ. . . .

7. . . . Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations . . . He is present . . . when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt 18:20). . . . In the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.

11. Pastors of souls must therefore realize that . . . it is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing,

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<sup>10</sup> *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 8 (New York: McGraw Hill Inc., 1967).

<sup>11</sup> *op. cit.*

actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects.

14. Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as a "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people" (I Pet 2:9 cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

26. Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the "sacrament of unity". . . .

30. To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes, and at the proper time all should observe a reverent silence.<sup>12</sup>

## The Present and the Future

How about the present? What does one find today upon entering a service-in-progress in St. Patrick's or Mooney Creek or Notre Dame de Paris?

It really depends—on all sorts of variables. Perhaps the most obvious and the most important would be the theological and interpersonal stance of the celebrant, and his interest and skill as a communicator. Is he aware of the outreach necessary to effect man-man and not only man-God, God-man recognition? And can he carry it out? The size of the congregation and the size and shape of the church and the seating arrangements therein are also factors. So too is the background of the worshippers. Are they aware of the community they are, or could be, before, during and after the worship service?

The above variables will affect the degree of aware participation in public worship in general. Yet, in the specifically Roman Catholic context, rather radical community-oriented changes have been mandated and have taken place. The celebrant (notice the word!) is sometimes at his chair, witnessing or directing the participation of others in their respective roles in the liturgy, sometimes at an altar facing the people, much closer than previously. The spoken or sung words are now in the language of the people. All sorts of opportunities are afforded and invitations issued to join in, extemporaneously or in fixed response. Among these are: the Kiss of Peace, the Prayer of the Faithful, the processions, the sharing of the Cup, dialogue in the homily, meaningful silence, more frequent standing instead of the more private kneeling posture.

These changes are based on the realization that liturgy is by definition a public act, the worship of the community. Those who participate, lay and ordained, say and pray "we," not "I." Ideally, they are aware of the implications of the "we" pray, the "we" believe, the "we" adore. I am not

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<sup>12</sup> *Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy* (Glen Rock, NJ: Paulist Press, 1964).

alone at worship! I and "we" participate as best we can, alert not only to the awesome presence of God but also to the others in the pew(s) and of the opportunity therein for celebration and community.

This has been no easy transition. Many worshippers, Catholic and Protestant, have seen an apparent contradiction in the expectation that they recognize both God and man in worship. Traditional Christians have a reputation for being solemn, even mournful in worship. Yet joy is a prime Christian virtue! Not that a continuous ripple of laughter is an ideal, but certainly there could be a more relaxed spirit of Christian fellowship *in* the service, not only after it. Dietrich Bonhoeffer seems to indicate that "fellowship" is more than the after-service coffee, punch and cookies. He doesn't apologize for speaking of "Word, fellowship, and Sacrament." Fellowship springs from the word and finds its completion in the Lord's Supper because "the whole common life of the Christian fellowship . . . begins and ends in worship."<sup>12</sup>

Someone has pointed out that children and lovers are supposed to laugh a lot. The Christian worshipper could (should?) be a bit of both. One need not blush if in worship he or she mirrors the simplicity of the child or the security of the lover. Indeed, it would seem that the heart and voice could (should?) therein be lifted in joy. Yet, a balance must be sought between reverence for God and community spirit, between awe and celebration.

The casual reader might find what follows difficult to understand, yet it is a fact that not only emotional and rational, but even moral barriers prevent many from any real celebration in worship. As priest and pastor, and as investigator into liturgical communication, I have discovered that many Catholics and Christians of all persuasions must be convinced of the non-sinfulness of in-church interaction! The traces of the Church's reaction to Arianism still exist and remain deep. An honest, deep seated awe or fear in God's presence remains a continued barrier to liturgical interaction. Were this mentality and resultant conduct passed on merely through the parochial or Sunday school or from the pulpit, perhaps less time and effort would be required to alter thinking and action. As it is no doubt true, however, the major teaching mode in this matter is parent to child, not a few years but generations might be required to achieve a spirit of somewhat relaxed community in Christian worship. For centuries past, *the* distinguishing mark of a Catholic, and, I suppose, of most Christians, has been reverence in church. The present urging towards a balanced recognition of God and one's fellowman is combatting a cultural trend of centuries.

Yet, progress is being made. The ideal is there, and increasingly recognized. "Alleluia's" are being sung more and more often. "Amen's" are being voiced even in so-called liturgical congregations as if what has preceded is truly recognized and agreed with. The exchange of the

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<sup>12</sup> *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: The MacMillan Co.) p. 285.

Peace is a commonality in Catholic worship and less of a surprise in a Protestant service than a few years ago. The "we" of our prayers is frequently a topic of sermon and conversation and is a continued opportunity for "us" to consider individual and community input into worship.

Nor is God and our relationship with him ignored in this process of community awareness. Just the opposite is true. He *is* and remains the focal point of liturgical action. All of this interpersonal communication, this celebration, is because of him and in the awareness of his presence. Indeed, there is strong argument that this sensed community, this aware joint participation, is according to his will and pleasure. God is thus surely rendered greater honor and glory and this adoration and praise remains the prime purpose of liturgy.

# MOBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Elaine W. Foreman

All children face some adjustment problems after a geographic move. They must adjust not only to a new environment, but to new friends and schools as well. They have to adapt to the loss of familiar faces, places, and situations. Some children apparently adjust easily but the performance of others seems to deteriorate with each move. It is reasonable, then, to investigate mobility as a factor influencing the academic performance of children.

There have been many studies done in the field of mobility, with varying results: some reported mobility to have an adverse effect; others reported it to have no effect; still others reported mobility to have a positive effect on academic achievement. Because of these divergent reports, it was determined that there was a need for further study, using such information as the child's I.Q. and the socio-economic status of his family.

There are three studies of child mobility involving the use of I.Q. and socio-economic status. I will discuss each separately since there are slight differences between them.

## WHALEN AND FRIED STUDY

Thomas E. Whalen and Mary Ann Fried (see attached Resource Materials) surveyed all the 11th graders in one school system. From these they selected 133 children who met the high mobility requirement and from them they chose seventy-nine whose I.Q. and achievement-test results were already in their files. Also selected were seventy-nine students who had not moved. The latter were selected randomly and designated as the *low* mobility group.

All of the students were given the Lorge-Thorndike Verbal I.Q. Tests and the Iowa Tests for Educational Development Achievement. They were charted according to the mean I.Q., which was calculated to be 109.43. Students were further charted according to their socio-economic status by means of the Hollingshead Occupation List (Hollingshead, 1965). A three-way analysis using high-low mobility, high-low I.Q., and high-low socio-economic status resulted.

The General Vocabulary Test was selected as the tool for measurement since the researchers regarded it as the best indicator of the type of acumen needed for success in school work.

The results showed the following:

1. The failing student was not affected by mobility.
2. High I.Q. students achieved significantly higher scores than

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lower I.Q. students, even though the effect of I.Q. on achievement was held constant.

3. High mobility students with high I.Q. obtained *higher* achievement scores than low mobility students with high I.Q. *In fact, they concluded that the interests and attitudes of high I.Q. students were actually stimulated by frequent moves.* High mobility students of low I.Q., however, obtained *lower* scores than low mobility students of low I.Q.

*There was no significant difference between high or low socio-economic students and no significant interaction of socio-economic status with either mobility or intelligence.* Thus, the hypothesis of the influence of socio-economic status was not supported.

The researchers concluded that parental attitudes might also be studied, taking into account family size and the child's positioning within the family.

### MORRIS, PESTANER, AND NELSON STUDY

Morris, Pestaner, and Nelson (see attached Resource Materials) felt that conflicting results of previous studies also indicated an omission of I.Q. and socio-economic status as criteria. They used reading and arithmetic as the subject area tools of measurement with a group of 5th graders in Alameda, CA. The following hypotheses were examined:

1. The proportion of high and low scores obtained by mobile children will differ from those of non-mobile children.

2. The mean reading and arithmetic scores obtained from mobile students will be no different from scores of non-mobile students.

In regard to the socio-economic status of the students, two additional hypotheses were examined:

3. The proportion of *non-mobile*, high socio-economic status children (gaining high reading skills) will be no different from the proportion of mobile, *high* socio-economic status students gaining high achievement scores.

4. The proportion of non-mobile, low socio-economic status pupils gaining high reading scores will be different from the proportion of mobile, low socio-economic status pupils gaining high scores.

The team determined the students' raw scores via the California Achievement Tests (CAT) in reading and arithmetic. From these scores they calculated, using the Anticipated Achievement Calculator, the students' anticipated achievement scores.

The number of schools attended and the occupation of the students' fathers were determined from school records. The socio-economic status was determined by using the Wilson Classification of socio-economic status. (This classification uses nine categories in contrast to the seven used by Hollingshead, but both separate the white-collar workers placing high executives and professionals at the top.)

The results were divided into thirds and the frequency of occurrence

of scores was calculated according to mobility. In the case of reading ability, the results confirmed hypothesis #1, but did not support it in arithmetic. The mean score distribution supported hypothesis #2. The data, which was further broken down according to socio-economic status, resulted in hypothesis #3 and #4 being supported. Moreover, the socio-economic status did not contribute to a statistically significant variance in the arithmetic scores.

*Thus the study did show there was an effect on reading achievement but not on arithmetic. It also showed that the families that achieved minimum stress during a move had children who find challenge and change to be facilitators of academic achievement.*

### GILLILAND STUDY

The Gilliland study (see attached Resource Materials) examined seventeen other studies done in the past ten years. It also suggested that I.Q. and socio-economic status be included as factors in such research.

Gilliland found, in three further studies involving 1,800 5th and 6th graders, that transient pupils were significantly ahead of non-transient in all subject areas except arithmetic. Furthermore, he found that high I.Q. transient students were superior to high I.Q. non-transient, while the achievement of low I.Q. transients was slightly but not significantly lower than low I.Q. non-transients. In fact, the advantage, according to the mean scores which transient pupils had over non-transient pupils, was found to increase with the number of schools attended. In another study done in Cincinnati, however, 5,901 6th grade pupils showed that reading and arithmetic were not effected by the number of schools attended.

### Summary and Conclusions

There is a definite influence of mobility on academic achievement, but the influence is not always negative. High I.Q., highly mobile students achieve better because of the added influences and experiences that mobility affords. However, mobility can be a detrimental influence on the average or below average student.

Personal experience supports many of the conclusions of these researchers. Our son has attended six schools and is now in 6th grade. He has always been an "A" and "B" student and has benefited from the added stimulus of new surroundings, experiences and world travel.

I also talked with other military families about the problem of mobility and scholastic achievement. One father assured me that two of his four children, who are high I.Q. students, had no ill effect from mobility, even though they attended five schools in the last three years. But his other two children, who are average in I.Q., had much more difficulty adjusting and achieving in the new schools.

Another father said that his two children are average students and have had difficulty with each move. He believes, however, that they

might have had trouble even if they had not moved. At the same time, he is convinced that they benefited from seeing new countries and areas which they would not have had the opportunity to see otherwise.

One mother told me her children had benefited from the mobile life, but added that it was harder on them when they became teenagers. All this points to the need for greater sensitivity in the design of school curricula and deeper awareness in the approach of teachers so that mobile and non-mobile children can share an equitable opportunity to learn.

The authors of *When Children Move from School to School* agree that the problem ought to be defined and studied, and that literature ought to be prepared offering guidance to parents and teachers alike. They further suggest that students ought to become acquainted with the resources which they have within themselves. If a student knows his own strengths and weaknesses he is better able to contend with the unknown. He must be encouraged toward independence, self-knowledge and the establishing of clear goals.

In a child's stages of development, those who supply his basic needs, the "significant others," change from family members to teachers and peers during his school years. Obviously then, mobility and the constant exchange of those "significant others" can and does influence his development.

As an example of additional difficulties which even high achievers face, one author noted that his son, who attended three high schools and maintained an "A" average, could not qualify for a scholarship to college simply because he had not been at any one school long enough to be recommended.

In *A Nation of Strangers* (Packard, 1972) seventy-four newcomers were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of moving. Forty-four percent felt that mobility had broadened them and that their children benefited by becoming more adaptable to life. Packard compared I.Q. test scores of mobile and non-mobile students and only minor differences seemed apparent. He concurred with R. Kieth Thomas, Principal of Lay School, Great Falls, Montana, who said: "The children above average in ability tend to adjust to a new school situation rather well, whereas adjustment is often a hardship on the student who is average or below in ability." Packard is also convinced that the ages of children play a big part in influencing how they adjust. He believes that family moves are especially hard on teenagers because they are shattered when leaving friends.

Packard also says that socio-economic status does have influence on those children whose parents are professionals or high executives. There is not only a tendency to accept them "instantly," but they are also more apt to be exposed to an academic atmosphere.

There is certainly a need for further study of the effects of mobility on children. More consideration might be given to helping families plan



their moves so that the stress level remains as low as possible. As Dr. Claire Koyce Lehr says, "Children react to moving just as their parents do, if parents are happy the children will be also." Perhaps what we need is to determine ways in which a transient family can move regularly with more meaning and enjoyment. This might be our first step in making the experience beneficial to all the children involved.

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## RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. "Geographic Mobility and Its Effect on Student Achievement" (Whalen and Fried, 1973).

A study done to determine the relationship between the academic achievements of high and low mobility students. The criteria used were I.Q., degree of mobility and socio-economic status. Results showed that highly mobile, highly intelligent children had higher achievement scores than lower mobility, lower intelligent children. Highly mobile children with lower intelligence also elicited lower achievement scores than low mobility students of low intelligence.

2. *A Nation of Strangers* (Packard, 1972).

A thorough study of the influences on the mobile family which accepts American mobility as a fact—not a hypothesis which has to be proven. Packard's study includes the affluent as well as the poor and gives

particular attention to the socio-economic status influences in regard to mobility.

3. *When Children Move from School to School* (Association of Childhood Education International, 1972).

A collection of articles dealing with all aspects of moving and their effects on students. The publication offers a helpful survey of the problems as well as some helpful solutions.

4. "Mobility and Achievement" (Morris, Pestaner, and Nelson, 1967).

A study undertaken to examine the assessments of elementary school teachers in Alameda, California, regarding the effects of mobility on their students. Results showed that mobility does have an effect on reading but not on arithmetic. Further investigation showed that the socio-economic status of the children was highly influential in regard to the effects of mobility.

5. "The Relation of Pupil Mobility to Achievement in the Elementary School" (Gilliland, 1967).

After reviewing seventeen previous studies which had published conflicting conclusions, Mr. Gilliland demonstrated, through a survey of students in Ohio, that the effects of mobility vary according to I.Q. and socio-economic status.

# GRIEF AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

John C. Raines

They're being mean to my friend William at work. They make fun of him behind his back—but not far enough behind that he doesn't hear. My friend William can't defend himself very well. He doesn't take pleasure in ridiculing others. It puzzles him—this taste for ridicule. So they berate him, and he doesn't fight back. They're winning.

William wants to win. He wants to be successful. He wants to be successful because his father wasn't. At least his father never thought he was (and William believed him). He was just a lawyer for the Housing Authority in Cleveland. But he sent William to Mount Hermon School, and then to Brown University, and then to Penn Law School. And now William is in a large corporate law firm in Philadelphia.

Recently he got himself into the Philadelphia Racquet Club. That's not as good as the Union League. It's miles behind the Philadelphia Club! But if you're going to have a chance to run in Philadelphia, you've got to start running in the Racquet Club.

I can't talk to William about any of this. I don't know why. He's my friend. It hurts him, I can see, that they're mean to him at work. I should be able to say something. But it's not something that men talk about.

The American Dream exacts a price from us. But we cling to it, even when it hurts, because we have woven our lives into it, or parts of our lives. We need to be gentle with each other, therefore, when we criticize the hope. When we're told that the Dream doesn't work, we grieve.

## GIFTS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

I should have known that, but I didn't—not at first. It was easy to see through the charade, to document the realities of locked-in privilege behind the myths of equal chance. What I had to learn was how sad this news makes people. They end up bereaved, not angry. This I learned from a middle-aged electrical worker in Philadelphia.

It was in March, during the recession of '75. I was being paid (by public funds) to spend time with unemployed and underemployed workers discussing American realities. I presented statistics and charts showing how unequal our country is, how locked-in the advantages, how unfair the distribution of burdens.

The workers were getting angry—"Yeah, that's right! Tell us how to get even!" Suddenly, one of them stopped the rest of us. "No, John," he said "that can't be right. My son's just finished Penn State. He's studied

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to be a history teacher. There are no jobs right now, of course, so he's writing sports stories. But my son is going to be a teacher!"

At the time I didn't see the sorrow—or the latent anger. I blundered on about "statistical chances" of success. But slowly it dawned on me what that worker was communicating. Not anger at the system, but anguish. He didn't want what I was saying to be true. His life, his pride and sacrifice were bound up with the Dream.

In many families, the Dream is *where love takes place*. It is through the Dream that parents give their children the only gift they think can make a real difference—the chance to become somebody. They can't give their offspring a house in the best suburb. They can't give them Harvard or memories of deep carpets and quiet talk. But they can give them the Dream. And it is the Dream that keeps the kids decent, in school and obeying the teacher, growing up in embattled neighborhoods where many flame out early.

Moreover, it is the success of succeeding generations that sanctifies the parents' sacrifice. Children can say "thank you" by succeeding. Right in the middle of the Dream is where the meaning of many American families is made whole. (And it is in families that most of us live our meanings.) A sense of continuity, of giving and receiving gifts across the generations, is confirmed.

No, my news was not good news to that worker. It hurt. And I was not gentle in breaking the news. I simply told him what I knew "statistically" to be true. I didn't help that man in his grieving. I didn't even see his grief at first.

Precisely here is where we are as a nation right now—much grieving with little understanding, truth-saying critics who don't see that they must also give comfort. For that is what grief requires—affirmation of prior attachments in order, slowly, to let them go. Otherwise, anger consumes, defeating the necessary work of sorrow.

There will in any case be plenty of anger, even with the most gentle handling. There will be anger and a sense of betrayal at the failing Dream. And in the next moment, there will be the most desperate and insistent clinging to that earlier attachment, and the most threatening behavior toward those who announce that it is over. All this is to be expected. It is the classical response to loss. And loss is at the center of our times. We are a nation in mourning.

### 'A CHANCE TO BECOME SOMEBODY'

To grieve means that first we must affirm. The American Dream began as an explosion of self-confidence. It was the boisterous and proud proclamation of a New World. Unlike the old world, where privilege came with birth and people knew where they belonged, in America we were to be unshackled from the bondage of previous generations. Ours was to be a land not of family fate, but of individual freedom.

Primogeniture laws were revoked soon after the Revolution. Wealth

was to belong to the successful seeker, not to the lucky inheritor. In America no one was to have the unfair advantage of simply "being" who he or she was—by name, by birth, by the accident of parental status. One was "to be" only what one could *become*.

Equal opportunity became the ideal by which we sought to transcribe into social practice this inalienable right to personal recognition. The Land of Promise offered the "chance to become somebody" in a land made open because nobody could simply *be*. There was, you can see, a certain fever in it, a kind of driven boisterousness.

This promise set loose an amazing expansion of self-esteem. It broke through the sedentary and determined quality of old-world societies where heart and vision were tamed early. There was a freedom to our land which made us, and in the eyes of much of the world still makes us, vastly appealing.

We were blessed in this restless urging by open frontiers. First, there was the open west (open except for the presence of the Indians), which promised new space for those cramped and held back by land that required the subservience of children to parents, of tiller to landlord—age-old cobwebs of obsequious relating.

Then, even as the west closed down, the new frontier of machine industry and rapid economic growth opened itself to the great waves of immigrants who came to our shores from 1848 through 1914 fleeing famine, war, religious and economic oppression. Still a third frontier kept the Dream rolling when again it was in danger of getting boxed in. President Franklin D. Roosevelt accepted "the challenge of history," and the American economy inherited the victory of World War II. Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan—our industrial rivals—were, for a while, eclipsed in the expansion of American power.

The pie of national wealth kept enlarging rapidly. "Equal opportunity" made room for itself not by a relative equality of belonging—over the years the shares of wealth remained highly concentrated and essentially unchanged—but by expanding the space within which the competing hopes of various persons and groups could find a place. We were never so much an open society as a wide-open society—consolidated not by distributive justice but by expansion of the field of available opportunities.

For a while, this process worked. It broke open people's sense of what they could expect, from themselves and from their children. It set loose the energy of a vast yearning across our land. The Land of Promise energized itself and became yeasty on the quest of people's dignity to find public place and recognition.

## THE CONTRADICTIONS OF 'EQUAL OPPORTUNITY'

Just here, of course, immense ironies opened up. The land where people could not "be" who they were (by birth and place), but must "become," produced unintended a quiet stampede where each could find

personal worth only by outdoing others in the crowded marketplace of repute. It was not just because the race was never equal, and because the ones on top always guarded their advantage, but because of an inherent contradiction that equal opportunity ended not in confirming self-esteem but in endlessly undermining a person's sense of firm and proven recognition. If we are permitted "to be" only what we can become, then we are never secure with who or where we are. We do not pursue so much as we are pursued by the hopes of what someday we may become.

Self-esteem became in our society a competitive commodity that pitted achievement against fraternity, made success the enemy of community, and undermined companionship with competitive performance. As a nation we short-circuited. Our fundamental values—freedom and personal dignity—were, by our public means of pursuing them, turned back upon themselves. We ended up undermining the self-esteem we meant to give room to.

Today, our values have been brought into a critical state of tension. Not only is equal opportunity inherently contradictory; it is also a social ideal that has functioned only under the conditions of a rapidly expanding economy. Wealth shares have remained consistently and steeply unequal in our country—the top 1 and 2 per cent of our population hold respectively 28 and 44 per cent of all the personally owned wealth. There is simply no way, except by rapid economic growth, to let the steam out of the American Dream. And today, it is precisely the future of rapid economic growth that has been cast into serious doubt.

This development makes our age a time of loss, a time of grieving. We suspect—rightly, I believe—that a whole way of fulfilling the promise of our land is ending. It has come up against the hard economic facts of newly expensive energy and basic raw materials. Whatever we do in the short run to push up, for a while, our gross national product, the background reality will remain long-range inflation. World economic patterns are shifting, with the rise of new "middle-class" nations like Japan, Brazil and the eastern European countries ready to compete with us for the Good Life, making that life even more expensive. Third World heads of government gain economic leverage by the nationalization and cartelization of domestic resources.

Our time of virtual economic hegemony is ending. The privileged "third frontier" we've enjoyed since World War II is closing. As a nation, we will have to learn to live with a slower economic growth rate and a flattened-out curve of life-style expectations. This won't be easy. Infinite expansiveness, not limits, is what we've been taught to admire.

Thus ours is a time of grief with all its ambivalent emotions: anger at the faltering Dream, and anger at those who announce that it's faltering. That's why we must deal carefully with each other. As a people and as persons, we have made sacrifices to the Dream. We have exchanged gifts across the generations. Or we have grown angry between the

generations and become alienated. In either case, our psychic lives have become deeply attached to the Dream.

## REINTERPRETING THE DREAM

Grief is not complete until we reinterpret the essential meaning of the past so as to integrate it into our future. In this way we can preserve a sense of integrity in our personal and family biographies. To do less is to invite upon ourselves a sense of having been cheated by the past. To be sure, the anger of that can produce change—change as in conversion, with the past totally denied and a completely different future embraced. But that sort of change leads to inordinate dependency, with no remembered gratitudes to give distance from and perspective upon our immediate meanings. If personal freedom and dignity are what we seek, then the self's sense of its own integrity must not be shredded.

What would such a reinterpretation of America's basic promises look like? The essential meaning of the Dream is its promise of personal dignity. It was this promise that appealed to millions of the Old World's inhabitants. Yet once in the New World they found that promise not easy to realize.

There has always been another story to America besides upward mobility and individual success. It is the story of pilgrims grinding out a meager existence from a punishing wilderness in the name of religious liberty. It is the story of successive waves of immigrants discovering not open frontiers but the closed realities of religious, ethnic and racial discrimination, powerful limits imposed by robber barons and bought politicians and laws that worked for the benefit of the few. Today, it is the story of millions of working-class families whose average income remains below \$9,000 a year with little in the way of job security.

This other America is the story of *shared shelter* more than of individual success and escape. It is the story of extended families living by the help of one another, of urban neighborhoods seeking a common decency. Equal opportunity's ideal of personal achievement and advance has always been balanced by this other emphasis upon loyalty and mutual sacrifice. A sense of place and belonging, of being somebody with family and neighbors, has modified the panic of having to become.

This story offers a different way of remembering ourselves as a people. It is not *Horatio Alger* so much as *The Grapes of Wrath* or *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* that evokes for most of us the symbols of our past. This memory provides, I believe, a way of moving into our national future with a sense of continuity. The new economic situation of required sacrifice is not new. We've been here before.

Moreover, we've learned by experience that the way to live peacefully within austere limits is by a fair sharing of the burdens and benefits of the community. This idea of fair sharing sets the basic guideline we need for social policy today. Questions of distributive justice can no longer be

swept under the rug of economic growth. Where sacrifices are required, everyone should have a say in deciding who's to pay which price.

## BURDENS VERSUS BENEFITS

Concretely, this means that we need a redistribution of tax burdens and income benefits. A fairer sharing of the burdens of society requires a thorough review of tax loopholes like capital gains and tax-free interest on state and municipal bonds. Generation-skipping trusts, the 50 percent exclusion on estates left to surviving widows, tax-sheltering devices in lumber and real estate, farm "loss," special depreciation benefits for racehorse breeders and the owners of professional sporting teams—all these need re-examining in the light of tax fairness. Without this adjustment, the price of the inevitable economizing that lies ahead will be the increasing impoverishment and powerlessness of all but the wealthy few.

We also need a fairer distribution of our society's benefits. We should revise the steep inequalities in our income differentials. Herman Miller, past director of the Bureau of the Census, points out the importance of counting *all* benefits as income, not just those that appear as "wages." For example, in 1970, comparing only wage differentials, the top one-fifth of our population earned about seven times as much as the lowest one-fifth. But adding in income-received-in-kind, the top one-fifth had 17 times the income of the lowest fifth!

We need to look again at business expense accounts with their lavish meals and entertainment allowances. We need to examine the issue of company-owned cars and airplanes, condominiums in Florida, hunting lodges in Colorado, and all-expense-paid "educational" trips to Miami. None of these tangible benefits-in-kind now gets counted as taxable income. Most of them are even tax-deductible, which mean poor people, workers and the middle class pay up the difference in lost tax revenues.

Tax money retrieved by bringing community discipline upon these unwarranted income and tax advantages could be used to raise the floor of socially guaranteed decency. We need major efforts in guaranteeing jobs, in the rehabilitation of older homes in deteriorating cities and suburbs, and in the renewal of urban transit. We need a national health program to provide decent medical and dental care for all. We need to ensure that legal services are available to fight for the interests of all classes, not just the upper class.

This lowering of the ceiling of special advantages and raising the floor of common decency would make it possible to accept within the boundaries of democratic consent the necessary economizing which faces us as a nation. A fairer sharing in the benefits and the burdens of our society would ease the acid cynicism which turns each against the other in the mad scramble to survive. Democracy depends upon a sense of public fairness and trust.

I realize that none of this is likely to happen. It's not likely because



the *National Enquirer* is still the largest-selling newspaper in the land, because Las Vegas is still the place where the big-money tennis matches are played, and because lottery tickets are selling better than ever. Hard times do not so much change peoples' dreams, it seems, as to make them dream them more desperately.

Still, the changes argued for here can happen, because the crunch is real, the world has altered, and the vision for national renewal is already there in our past. The memory of common shelter in hard times, of sharing fairly the burdens and benefits of society, can help us move beyond our sense of loss and anger in order to rebuild.



# INFERENTIAL THEOLOGY: *de rigueur* or *un grand péril*?

Chaplain (CPT) Robert H. Countess, Ph.D.

One of the most serious dangers to meaningful Christianity in the present era is the proliferation of opinions about what the Bible is alleged to teach. Perhaps the quickest way to see this allegation is to tune in to a "Gospel" radio station, *i.e.*, one with a seemingly interminable array of preachers (*cum* D.D.s) promoting their books, papers, and pamphlets for free or fee.

The original humility of many is usually negated by the dominance of the inductive mode and the absence—or near absence—of the subjunctive mode; that is the speaker asserts with definite finality *his* interpretations about the various prooftexts cited rather than prefacing his comments with "if" or "in my opinion." In other words, the presentation is often characterized by a one-to-one identification of the speaker's interpretation with the original meaning of Scripture. The present situation betrays an every-speaker-is-a-Pope-for-himself syndrome.

"Inferential Theology" is the product of human response and reflection upon the sacred text. It may take on the resultant form of Biblical Theology, Systematic Theology, Practical, Pastoral and so on. In short, Inferential Theology may be anything one asserts about the meaning or application of the text other than the actual words of the Scriptures themselves. If Inferential Theology has been thus established, then one ought to ask: Is it strictly required activity (*de rigueur*)? (Here *de rigueur* speaks of that required by the obvious condition imposed on man by the fact that Scripture does not speak explicitly *to* or *about* every matter believers face.) Or is it a perilous activity (*un grand péril*)? Perhaps further, is it both?

Someone may raise the question: What is so problematic about Inferential Theology? In answer, the problem stems in part from the traditional philosophical difficulty known as "the problem of induction." This can best be grasped by comparing induction to deduction. For example:

*Major Premise:* All men are mortal.

*Minor Premise:* Socrates is a man.

*Conclusion:* ∴ Socrates is mortal.

According to deduction the conclusion has to follow logically. Even if it could be shown that in 399 B.C. Socrates was bodily assumed into heaven. In my opinion, however, it is the God-created nature of logic that it does not have a 1:1 correspondence with reality.

Now with induction, one moves from the particulars of experience to a general observation supposedly based upon those particulars. For example, in the course of one's experience, one observes (one inducts or

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induces, or one infers) that death is the normal experience for all mankind. But, whereas the particular induction might be shown at the end of time to have been correct, there is no logically necessary way to show at the present moment that this inference is correct. With inductive/inferential reasoning there is always a gap. Beyond the gap may lie numerous inferences based on particulars: (1) all men die; (2) most men die; (3) some men die; (4) everything I observe is unreal; (5) the moon consists of green cheese; just to cite a few possibilities.

Now Inferential Theology is all attempts at explicating the inspired text which go beyond the mere vocalizing of the text itself. (Of course, even vocalizing could become inferential by means of one's inflections, divisions of phrases, order of verses—as in a responsive reading or lectionary.) Having thus defined Inferential Theology is it therefore to be shunned? Is it *un grand péril*? Or is it to be humbly embraced as *de rigueur* (i.e., strictly required) activity which Christ-confessors must pursue?

A most important question needs to be asked. Must all knowledge about God be reduced to inference? If so, “then we are of all men the most miserable.” Ludwig Feuerbach's smile could then be drawn wide and damning, because his judgment that all theology is simply anthropology would be firmly established. Thankfully, such is not the case. We presuppose that the Scriptures, which are the Word of God in written form, contain direct assertions in the indicative mode about God and by God.

For example, “I am a jealous God,” is an indicative, qualitative assertion about the God of Scripture. It is emphatically not adduced as a theoretical notion or opinion of Moses. It is not an inference about God simply drawn from something in the context. The jealousy of God is recorded as a datum of primary revelation.

By contrast, note the words of Chapter II, paragraph 3 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* stated in the indicative mood:

In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: the Father is of none, neither begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.

Those phrases contain some significant words found in the English Bible—substance, power, eternity, God, the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, begotten, and proceeding. However, it is obvious that the paragraph itself is not an excerpt from Scripture. The framers of this valuable confession were engaged in confessing not xeroxing. Their confession must be acknowledged as such and tested and re-tested by the Scriptures themselves.

Confessions by nature are limiting concepts, the latter being defined by Cornelius Van Til:

If we hold to a theology of the apparently paradoxical we must also hold, by consequence, the Christian notion of a limiting concept. The non-

Christian notion of the limiting concept has been developed on the basis of the non-Christian conception of mystery. By contrast we may think of the Christian notion of the limiting concept as based upon the Christian conception of mystery. The non-Christian notion of the limiting concept is the product of would-be autonomous man who seeks to legislate for all reality, but bows before the irrational as that which he had not yet rationalized. The Christian notion of the limiting concept is the product of the creature who seeks to set forth in systematic form something of the revelation of the Creator. . . The creeds must therefore be regarded as "approximations" to the fulness of the truth as it is in God. (*Common Grace*, p. 11)

Is it perhaps idolatrous to elevate a limiting concept or a confessional document to the level of or higher than the Scriptures? One can readily justify requiring belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit; but can one, for example, require with the same sense of importance a belief in the term "Trinity" if someone else objects to the word because it is a non-Biblical term? Certainly, an individual should be free to embrace purely Scriptural terms and free to reject non-Biblical terms, even though the non-Biblical may very well reflect the Biblical position.

There are many current examples of Inferential Theology. Let us examine a few of the more obvious ones.

There are some groups, for instance, who declare it to be unscriptural to sing anything other than the 150 Psalms or to use any musical instrument in stated services of worship. Now everyone will agree that nowhere does Scripture assert in the following or similar words: "You shall not sing in a worship service songs other than the 150 Psalms." Thus, this is an area of Inferential Theology and, therefore, certain caution must be exercised by its proponents lest the inference be elevated to the level of primary revelation. Those who hold this position claim to follow what is called "the Regulative Principle" and insist upon its normative value for the New Testament Church. This principle asserts that nothing should be permitted in a worship service unless it is specifically required by the New Testament. Since nowhere does the New Testament speak of using musical instruments in worship, they conclude that we shouldn't use them either. Similarly, since the Psalms alone are alleged to have been sung in the Old Testament Church, we ought to sing them and them alone (the Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 passages are interpreted as referring only to these same Psalms).

By way of a critical observation, this approach has been accused of manifesting a kind of Dispensationalist discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments. That is, although there is a divine/historical precedence—musical instruments boldly used in Temple worship for nearly a thousand years—we must not do so today. It is this radical disjunction between Old Testament and New Testament which Dispensationalism affirms and which the basic theologies of these groups are supposed to deny.

Another criticism is that of gross inconsistency; *e.g.*, when our brethren sing Psalm 150 in a worship service:

Praise Him with the trumpet sound!  
Praise Him with the lute and harp!  
Praise Him with the timbrel and dance!  
Praise Him with the strings and pipe!  
Praise Him with the sounding cymbals!

Here they find themselves vocalizing imperatives (do this, do that) which they are on record as saying are unacceptable in divine worship. With one breath they follow the psalmist in commanding the use of instruments in praising God and with another breath they forbid the same.

In II Chronicles 29:28, "The whole assembly worshiped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded. . . ." as King Hezekiah led the temple worship. Instrumental music seems to have been *basic* to formal Old Testament worship. Perhaps someone will say, however, that instrumental music was not basic to synagogue services. So be it. But would anyone want to make synagogue order and content to be normative for us today? If that approach is taken, then the Old Testament Scriptures alone can be used in the Church of today, because the early Church had to wait many years for formal completion of the Canon. The New Covenant Church of the first century was no doubt influenced by the synagogue, but it was not a slave thereto.

This so-called "Regulative Principle" must be seen as an inferential principle and must be judged accordingly. It is not an absolute and one ought not to be deemed as sinning who goes against mere inference. True sinful activity is that which goes against the declarative Law of God and such Law is not inferential.

Christian people, it would seem, have an obligation to give serious consideration to the unstated implications of the declarative Law of God and to weigh carefully whatever inferences they may draw from them. But when one crosses the threshold from the room of declarative, explicit Law and enters the room of inference, one must tread carefully and humbly with his brethren, especially those who remain outside the latter room.

A final observation on the "Regulative Principle" may be in order. Some Christians make use of a similar principle when they assert: Since the New Testament does not explicitly command the baptism of infants, we will not baptize them. In several ways those previously mentioned do not follow the "Regulative Principle" on this matter. First, they observe infant baptism within a regular worship service; but where does the New Testament give support for baptizing anyone at any point during such a service? Secondly, they would have to agree that nowhere is there a command to baptize infants. Infant baptism is based in whole, or at least in part, on inference—even though that basis is found in some extremely cogent and compelling inferential data. Everyone should

agree that if there were an explicit statement *to* or *not to* baptize our covenant children, the disagreement between these Christians on this matter would cease.

By way of another example, there are those who maintain that the practice of barring women from certain church offices is unscriptural. Yet we are all aware that Scripture nowhere states: "Qualified women shall be ordained as elders and deacons." And yet, even though they are aware of Paul's explicit statements about women in the churches of Corinth and Ephesus, some of these Christians *infer* that when all Scripture is taken into consideration, there is an adequate basis for admitting qualified women to these offices. Certain heroines of Scripture are noted as obviously having asserted some measure of authority over men. It is also contended, inferentially, to be sure, that the Pauline assertion that "in Christ there is neither male or female" at least opens up in principle the possibility for women in the offices cited. In the first century, Paul's statement was a radical one, to be sure, when placed against the backdrop of Greek, Roman, and Rabbinic notions about the ontological inferiority of women.

In summation, is there really a difference in principle between the position which denies extra-Psalmic hymns and instrumental music in divine worship and that which supports the ordination of women? It seems that if one group is to be judged as dead wrong, then why not the other also?

The value(s) of Inferential Theology ought to be catalogued, assessed, debated and published abroad. The ever-present danger of Inferential Theology is especially due to the Problem of Induction. (An intriguing question presents itself: Did Adam and Eve encounter the Problem of Induction *before* the Fall or is this problem a *result* of the Fall?)

Finally then, is Inferential Theology *de rigueur* or *un grand péril*? I see it as both. An analogue to it might be *fallen* man's sexuality: it is both necessary and perilous. Insofar as we have a penchant for systematization, Inferential Theology is necessary—for there is no obvious, well-structured system that leaps out at those who read the Scriptures. "Systems" are *induced* or *inferred* or *drawn from* the Scriptures, one hopes.

Part of the great peril of Inferential Theology is the proliferation of *personalized* theologies. This syndrome might be Corinthian: I'm of Paul/Cephas/Apollos/Christ; as well as modern: I'm of Aquinas/Luther/Barth/Hodge/Scofield *et. al.* The myriads of systematic theologies are perhaps explainable by some very obvious causes—different presuppositions about reality, different emphases about "the key" to Scripture; new information about philology, culture and history; and, finally a dissatisfaction with what others have done—*e.g.*, Luke's *edoze kamoï* (Luke 1:3), "It seemed good also to me."

So let us continue our inferential endeavors—but humbly. At the same time, let us pray earnestly for systematic and related theologians,

because rationalistic pitfalls are ever before them, as Church History well testifies. Theirs is a most difficult and perilous, but necessary calling.



# THE CONTINUING REVOLUTION

John M. Mulder, Ph.D.

The American people celebrated the nation's Bicentennial this year in a more subdued fashion than some anticipated. For a small minority, the Bicentennial was an occasion for scorn and cynicism about American politics and institutions; for another small minority, the Bicentennial offered an opportunity to rekindle the patriotism of yesterday—a zealous love of country, right or wrong. But the vast majority of Americans seemed to greet the Bicentennial with gritted teeth, something to be endured, certainly not celebrated.

This attitude is scarcely surprising. During the past decade and a half, the nation has endured one of the most turbulent, wrenching periods in American history. In fifteen years, we have had four different Presidents, an average of less than one full term for each one. The first was assassinated. The second was driven from office by protest over what many considered an iniquitous and unnecessary war. The third was exposed as a scheming opportunist who would subvert the law to his own purposes. The fourth serves as a President who has never been elected.

During this same period, the American people were forced to begin confronting the legacy of its racist past, both in individual and institutional terms. Many Americans also caught a glimpse of that “other America” where poverty and malnutrition existed in the midst of unparalleled food supplies. Caught in a whipsaw of boom and bust economics, many found their dreams destroyed and their energies sapped by inflation. Virtually every day the nation is treated to further examples of abuses of power—corporations that bribe their way to wider markets, law enforcement officials who break the law, intelligence agencies that spy on American citizens. Decaying cities, energy shortages, world hunger—everyone has a favorite crisis.

The twin body blows of Watergate and Vietnam combined to produce the *coup de grace*. Here supposedly was the first war that the United States had lost. In historical terms, the assertion is ridiculous, especially in light of the dubious “victories” in the Korean War, World War I, or the War of 1812. But the fact that such a statement could be made is testimony to the deeply rooted faith in American power and our need to see the nation as invincible. What also died in Vietnam was the blind assumption of American uniqueness—our special moral responsibility, if not superiority, for bearing the banner of truth and justice in the world.

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The destruction and suffering of Indo-China became so utterly senseless and morally obtuse that America's sense of "mission," which was a crucial part of our national self-identity, is virtually shattered.

As the disastrous effect of our military might was impressed upon us, Watergate exposed the sordid quality of our political life. Richard Nixon was elected in 1972 with the largest electoral mandate in American history, and his overwhelming victory was due in large measure to his ability to seem to represent publicly all of the values that many Americans held dear. In less than two years he was forced to resign.

These assaults on the national psyche—and the pace of them—during the past fifteen years have been devastating. The result is that today we are a nation in a state of shock. Numbed by recent events, confused and uncertain, no one was quite sure what the Bicentennial was designed to celebrate.

## I

Actually, this was a particularly appropriate mood in which to celebrate the American Revolution. A close study of the Revolution indicates what a perilous undertaking it was, the vast potential for failure, and the real possibility of defeat. With some relief and amazement, John Adams observed at the end of the war that the Revolution was the accident of thirteen clocks striking at the same time. Similarly, our Centennial celebration in 1876 took place against the aftermath of the Civil War, the end of Reconstruction, the scandals of the Grant Administration, political deals in the Presidential election of 1876, agrarian and labor protest, and the rise of virulent racism. It is perhaps small comfort, but a Bicentennial celebrated in the midst of confusion and uncertainty was strikingly faithful to the "spirit of '76." Our nation was born in adversity, not in triumph or self-confidence.

Given the current mood, to talk of a continuing revolution seems faintly ridiculous. But it may be that one way to begin reconstructing our national life involves a new appreciation of the ideas and principles of the American Revolution. By understanding why Americans fought and died in the Revolution, by trying to grasp what the architects of the government tried to build, we can receive some resources to meet the difficult and agonizing problems that lie before us, as a church and as a nation. Particularly important to the Revolution and crucial to our crises today is the revolutionary understanding of power, liberty, and justice.

## II

In 1818, thirty-five years after the end of the Revolution and forty-three years after the battle of Lexington and Concord, John Adams wrote to a friend, "What do we mean by the American Revolution? Do we mean the American war? The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments, of their duties and obliga-

tions. This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people was the real American Revolution.”<sup>1</sup>

What Adams was pointing to was the fundamental shift in “the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people” that lay at the center of American colonial history and the Revolution itself. In no other area was this change more pronounced or had such profound consequences as the colonial attitude toward power. Essentially this was a development from a deferential to a democratic understanding of the nature of society and government.

The case for the deferential society was put forth succinctly by John Winthrop in his *Modell of Christian Charity*, formulated for the Massachusetts Puritans. “God Almighty in his most holy and wise providence,” Winthrop declared, “hath soe disposed of the Condition of mankinde, as in all times some must be rich, some poore, some highe and eminent in power and dignities; others meane and in subieccion.”<sup>2</sup> The duty of those who were “poore . . . meane and in subieccion” was clear. They should respect God’s wise ordering of the world and obey those who were granted power, wealth, and dignity. They were required to defer to those blessed with better blood, more land, and more influence. Here there was no rags-to-riches or log-cabin-to-White-House mythology; social mobility was unthinkable and contrary to God’s law.

Obviously this was one of the “sentiments and affections” which had to be undermined before there could be any American Revolution, for a blind deference toward power was incompatible with any serious questioning of British authority. The most fundamental factor in eroding the attitude of deference was unquestionably economic. Puritans and other colonists discovered that in contrast to the Old World, the poor did not always remain poor. Their lands produced bountiful harvests; their trade increased. The static, stratified society envisioned by Winthrop and ordained by God gave way under the pressure of the increasing economic prosperity of American land. As Hannah Arendt has suggested, people “began to doubt that poverty is inherent in the human condition, to doubt that the distinction between the few, who through circumstances or strength or fraud had succeeded in liberating themselves from the shackles of poverty, and the laboring poverty-stricken multitude was inevitable and eternal. This doubt,” she argues, “or rather the conviction that life on earth might be blessed with abundance instead of being cursed by scarcity was prerevolutionary and American in origin; it grew directly out of the American colonial experience.”<sup>3</sup>

Closely associated with this new perception was a theological change in the conception of human nature. Calvinism, which became the domin-

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<sup>1</sup> John Adams to Hezekiah Niles, 1818, cited in Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> *A Modell of Christian Charity*, excerpted and reprinted in Michael McGiffert (ed.), *Puritanism and the American Experience* (Reading, Mass., 1969), p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York, 1963), p. 15.

ant theological tradition of colonial America by virtue of Protestant immigration, saw human beings as totally corrupted by sin. Originally this idea had few political implications as long as it was restricted to individuals and confined to the church. Gradually, however, the idea of total depravity moved out of the ecclesiastical sphere and into politics. Under the right conditions, it was possible to see not only people as sinful but rulers as well.

The result was a profound change in the colonial attitude toward power. Influenced as well by English Whig political thought, the colonists began to see power as evil, aggressive, and dangerous, a view so common to the revolutionary generation that many historians see it as the heart of American revolutionary ideology.<sup>4</sup> For Americans 200 years ago, power was to be distrusted, not trusted. It was to be feared, not revered. Power was human and therefore sinful. Leaders were suspect precisely because they were human; they used their authority for self-aggrandizement and to acquire even more power.

The colonists repeatedly sounded this theme of power as a potential threat. According to William Livingston, a Presbyterian layman and the first governor of the state of New Jersey, "power of all Kinds is intoxicating," turning "the head of its Possessor" and luring its victims with "the bewitching Charms of despotic Sovereignty." Absolute rulers "have acted more like imperial Wolves, or rather Beasts in human Shape, than rational and intelligent Beings." Congregationalist minister Jonathan Mayhew insisted that power had "a grasping, encroaching nature . . . [It] aims at extending itself and operating according to mere *will* wherever it meets with no balance, check, control, or opposition of any kind."<sup>5</sup>

But it was John Adams who gave perhaps the best expression of this revolutionary understanding of power, viewed in Calvinist terms. In words that resound to our present day, Adams wrote, "Power always thinks it has a great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak; and that it is doing God's service when it is violating all His laws. Our passions, ambitions, avarice, love, and resentment, etc. possess so much metaphysical subtlety and so much overpowering eloquence that they insinuate themselves into the understanding and the conscience and convert both to their party."<sup>6</sup>

Today we have largely lost or are only beginning to recover this attitude toward power. According to one poll, in 1964 seventy-six percent of the American people trusted government officials to do what was right most of the time. By 1972 that figure had fallen to fifty-two

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<sup>4</sup> See especially Bailyn, *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, and Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1969).

<sup>5</sup> William Livingston, *The Independent Reflector*, Milton M. Klein, ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 78; Jonathan Mayhew, *The Snare Broken . . .* (Boston, 1766); Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, p. 57.

<sup>6</sup> John Adams writing to Thomas Jefferson, cited in Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (New York, 1952), p. 21.

percent. In 1974, only one third of the people said that they could trust their leaders.<sup>7</sup>

Most people have been alarmed by this phenomenon. In every area of American life, eulogies are being delivered over the grave of authority. Within the church most of the energy and effort is extended in the direction of shoring up the institution, encouraging people to trust leaders and follow established policies. In politics, candidates are valiantly attempting to convince people that they are more trustworthy than their rivals. Although it is clear that rampant disrespect toward authority and fear of power is finally destructive of social cohesion, there is a healthy cynicism which characterizes the current American attitude toward leaders and institutions. It has been long in coming, but the combination of Watergate and Vietnam have prompted the American people to begin to see power as the revolutionaries did—as human, sinful, and potentially a threat.

### III

The corollary of this conception of power was the understanding of liberty. Power and liberty were locked in a constant, cosmic conflict. Power resided in the government; liberty inhered in the people. While power was aggressive and imperial, always seeking to dominate, liberty was consistently on the defensive, resisting the encroachments of power. Further, the colonists invariably portrayed power as male and liberty as female, a feminist twist to the interpretation of the American Revolution.

What is often missed in this rhetoric of liberty was the way in which many colonists linked political liberty to religious freedom. “Civil and religious liberty is the foundation of public happiness and the common birthright of mankind,” argued William Livingston. “It is the duty and interest of every individual to keep a watchful eye over it and to cherish it with the utmost care and tenderness.” For Livingston, a drafter of the Constitution, the union of church and state was “the most fatal engine ever invented by satan for promoting human wretchedness.”<sup>8</sup>

From Livingston and others like him emerged the disestablishment of the church and the separation of church and state, perhaps the most revolutionary act of our American Revolution. For the first time since Constantine, a state had declared that the existence of a particular church was not necessary to ensure the viability of the state. Likewise, the American churches, slowly but gradually, embraced liberty as more conducive to their prosperity than the establishment of any one church. Today it is virtually impossible to recover the radical departure from previous history that the separation of church and state represented,

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<sup>7</sup> The poll was conducted by the University of Michigan Center for Political Studies and the Gallup Organization and reported in *Newsweek*, April 12, 1976, p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> “Remarks on the origin of government and on religious liberty,” January 1778, *American Museum*, IV (December, 1788), 492–93.

but the Revolutionary generation knew it had broken with the past. Jefferson, for example, is supposed to have taken more pride in his authorship of the Virginia Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom than anything else he did in his political career.

For most Americans religious liberty has become a virtual shibboleth of American life, used for any number of purposes, including invoking it to distinguish between American democracy and Russian or Chinese communism. And yet, the easy allegiance to religious freedom today should not mask its significance for the American churches and its rather brutal past.

What has been extraordinarily difficult and painful for the American churches to realize is that religious liberty committed the churches to religious pluralism as well. Throughout the nineteenth and for a good deal of the twentieth century, American Protestantism in particular attempted to deny diversity and shape American society after its own image. Catholics, blacks, Jews, Mormons, and other groups were simply defined out of the culture. One nineteenth century Presbyterian gave especially blatant expression to this religious imperialism. "This is a Christian Republic, our Christianity being of the Protestant type," he wrote. "People who are not Christians, and people called Christians, but who are not Protestants, dwell among us; but they did not build this house. We have never shut our doors against them but if they come, they must take up with such accommodations as we have. . . . As for this land, we have taken possession of it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, if he will give us the grace to do it, we mean to hold it for him till he comes." <sup>9</sup>

Certainly part of our contemporary anguish is due to the legacy of hostility and hatred which this attitude encouraged, and a continuing challenge to American society and the American churches is facing up to the implications of religious and cultural pluralism. Whether this takes the form of prayer in the public schools or open housing, the nation is still confronted with its revolutionary experiment in religious liberty and cultural pluralism.

For the church, this need not mean a relativizing of the gospel into a homogeneous mess of American pottage. In fact, the church's attempt to dominate American society contributed substantially to the dilution of the church's prophetic voice and to forming an American civil religion. Rather, religious freedom and the recognition of cultural diversity might free the church to measure American society rather than be swallowed up by it. Liberated from the desire to recreate Christendom, we might recover the resources to proclaim the gospel faithfully.

#### IV

Closely related to the Revolutionary understanding of power and

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<sup>9</sup> Samuel M. Campbell, "Christianity and Civil Liberty," *American Presbyterian and Theological Review*, V (July, 1867), 390-91, cited by James Moorhead, "American Apocalypse," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1975, p. 288.

liberty was the conception of justice, and it is here that the United States has faced and continues to face its most perplexing and divisive struggle, particularly in dealing with racial and economic issues. The Revolution itself was both ambiguous and deeply flawed in its attempt to comprehend and create a full measure of justice in American life.

For example, a staple of Revolutionary pamphlets and sermons was the theme of slavery. The colonists complained that England had deprived the colonies of their liberties and reduced them to a state of vassalage. A few colonists sensed the incongruity of protesting against British policy as enslavement and continuing to hold Africans captive. Connecticut Congregationalist Levi Hart denounced "the horrible slave trade" as a sin and exclaimed, "What inconsistency and self-contradiction is this! . . . When, O when shall the happy day come, that Americans shall be *consistently* engaged in the cause of liberty?"<sup>10</sup> Hart's was a lonely voice, although the Revolution did mark the beginning of the antislavery movement and the abolition of slavery in the North. Southern slavery prevailed and flourished, only to convulse the nation in a Civil War and leave the persistent problem of racial injustice.

The constitutional settlement of the race question indicated a pattern in American racism. In the Constitution of 1787, apportionment in Congress was formulated in terms of the white population of each state and three-fifths of the slave population. In other words, justice could only be refused to black people by denying their humanity—by defining them as three-fifths of a human being. Even today injustice flourishes when racism encourages people to conceive of others as less than human.

Similarly, despite the now famous protests by Abigail Adams that women were determined "to foment a rebellion" unless their equality was recognized, the American Revolution was essentially for men only. The nineteenth century witnessed the rise of the feminist movement but also saw the gradual and increasing separation of women from full participation in American economic and social life. Like racism, sexism retained its hold only when a woman could be understood as less than a man.

Despite these profound inconsistencies and partial understandings of justice, every major reform movement in American history has returned to the spring of the American Revolution for much of its inspiration, rhetoric, and ideological justification. At perhaps the most basic level, the civil rights and women's rights movements today urge a realization of the basic principles enunciated in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. This is dramatic evidence of the continuing impact and revolutionary character of the American Revolution, which cannot be contained and which continues to speak to and for new groups at different times. Like the leaders of the

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<sup>10</sup> Levi Hart, *Liberty Described and Recommended* . . . (Hartford, 1775), cited in Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, p. 243.



Revolution two hundred years ago, the United States is confronted with the question of how far the Revolution should go, whether the ideas of the Revolution are true for only some or for all.

Benjamin Rush, the enormously talented physician in Philadelphia who became involved in virtually every reform movement of his day, sensed the way in which the Revolution had not been finished and should not end. Writing in 1787 as the Constitution was being drafted, Rush declared, "The American war is over, but this is far from the case with the American Revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed. It remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government, and to prepare the principles, morals, and manners of our citizens for these new forms of government after they are established and brought to perfection." <sup>11</sup>

What Rush was arguing and what this nation needs to realize again is that America's strength does not lie in the power or even durability of its institutions but in the values that give them purpose and meaning. Today the ideas that undergirded the American Revolution are usually forgotten or ignored. From the Third World to American cities, in one policy after another, the United States testifies to the ideas of its own Revolution more in the breach than the practice. For millions of people in the world, American power has become synonymous with tyranny, not freedom, and with oppression, not justice. Even for many of its citizens, American political values are treated with cynicism.

Fifteen years ago, Arnold Toynbee issued this blunt verdict. "The American Revolution has gone thundering on," he said. "Nothing can stop it, no, not even the American hands that first set it rolling. But during these last . . . years, your revolution has gone on without you. The leadership has fallen into other hands. These non-Americans could never have seized the leadership of your revolution if you had not dropped it." The United States, he continued, finds itself in the position "of being the leader of the very opposite of what America's World Revolution stands for. . . . But the future is still open. Your role in the coming chapter of the World's history is not yet irrevocably decided. It is still within your power to re-capture the lead in your own revolution." <sup>12</sup>

Perhaps Toynbee's optimism is justified. One might hope so. But a more somber note must be sounded as well. For the Christian, any final confidence and faith in either a leader or the political existence of the United States is ultimately idolatrous. In the brutally realistic words of the psalmist,

Put not your trust in princes,  
in a son of man in whom there is no help.  
When his breath departs he returns to his earth;  
on that very day his plans perish (146:3-4).

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<sup>11</sup> Cited in Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, p. 230.

<sup>12</sup> Page Smith, *A New Age Now Begins: A People's History of the American Revolution* (New York, 1976), p. 1832.



Our hope cannot be that God will intercede and turn everything in America's favor, and such confidence is even contrary to much of the Puritan heritage. The Puritans had an acute sense of God's judgment that came as both blessing and curse. The words of John Winthrop are often quoted to stir American hearts: "Wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us." What is virtually always omitted is Winthrop's conclusion: "soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world." <sup>13</sup>

Whether the United States shall become "a story and a by-word through the world" is unknown to all of us, but as Christians such a prospect ought not to be the cause of despair. Our hope should not lie in the preservation or cultivation of American power but in God's refusal to surrender history to us. Woodrow Wilson, in somewhat secularized terms, captured this basic sense that despite the injustice of human history, God was still in control, redeeming the world. "Power in its last analysis is never a thing of mere physical force," Wilson declared. "The power that lasts has as its center the just conception to which men's judgments assent, to which their hearts and inclinations respond. An unjust thing is ever ephemeral; it cannot outlast any age of movement or inquiry." <sup>14</sup>

Wilson was pointing to the truth of what Paul said in Romans 8—that we need not fear death, or life, or angels, or principalities, or things present, or things to come because we are already more than conquerors through Jesus Christ. Or, in the words of the psalmist,

Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob  
whose hope is in the Lord his God  
who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all  
that is in them;  
who keeps faith for ever;  
who executes justice for the oppressed;  
who gives food to the hungry (146:5–7).

That should be more than small comfort for a church as it enters the third century of American life and prophetic wisdom for a nation that has lost its way.

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<sup>13</sup> *A Modell of Christian Charity*, in McGiffert, *Puritanism and the American Experience*, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> "The Statesmanship of Letters" in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Arthur S. Link et al., eds. (Princeton, N.J., 1966—), Vol. XV, p. 36.



# MARRIAGE PREPARATION: RESPONSE TO A CRITICAL SOCIAL NEED

Chaplain (MAJ) John W. Schumacher  
Chaplain (CPT) Frank D. Richardson

Ruptured and fractured family relationships are so common that almost no one can claim to be unaffected by divorce. The staggering increases in the national divorce rate during the last decade have left us with good reason to conclude that the "typical American family" is a family in the process of degenerating. Much of the effort and energy of government is currently focused on remedial and compensatory programs to aid victims of families which are ailing or have collapsed. Family-maintenance education and marriage and family counseling are close to the very core of contemporary pastoral priorities.

No one would be helped much by finding a place to lay the blame for this unfortunate phenomenon. Some very vocal people in our society are even applauding the demise of the family. At best, we can say that many of those who do choose to marry have entered that union poorly prepared for the pressures and responsibilities which they are sure to encounter.

Couples anticipating marriage at Fort Lewis and its surrounding communities have easy access to a progressive and vital alternative to ill-begun marriages. The Marriage Preparation Course is a continuing group preparation program sponsored by the Fort Lewis chaplains.

## Background of the Program

Post-wide marriage preparation classes began at Ft. Lewis in 1971 under the aegis of its creator, Chaplain (CPT) Tom Smith. The original format for the course, still adhered to, included four evening sessions in any given month. Each session, lasting two hours, covered a different aspect of the marriage relationship. Completion of the course required attendance at each of the four classes, though not necessarily in sequence.

While records for the beginning years of the program are no longer available, we know that 200 participated in the program in 1973, and slightly over 300 in 1974. The completion rate for both years was around fifty percent.

The initial success of the course could be attributed both to the devotion of its originator and to the strong support of the program from the Post Chaplain. In 1972 it became a post policy for all couples, who

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intended to be married by chaplains at Ft. Lewis, to complete the course.

All of the instructors, or facilitators, for the various classes in the course had some expertise in each of the aspects of the marriage relationship. Classes on the religious aspects of marriage and on communication in marriage were led by chaplains. Leadership of the class on financial and legal aspects was shared by an individual from Army Community Services and a representative of the Judge Advocate General branch. The class on the physical and sexual aspects of marriage was led by an OB-GYN physician from Madigan Army Medical Center.

Little has been deleted from the original format of the course, though the content has undergone some significant changes. The reliance upon a multiple resource base for instruction/facilitation has remained and is being expanded in the current program.

### Surveys of Chaplain Preferences for the Program

The Marriage Preparation Program has proven to be one of the most viable and effective chaplain programs at Ft. Lewis. During 1975, the Ft. Lewis chaplains made a focused and concerned effort to upgrade even further the quality of the effectiveness of the course. In November 1974, the chaplains on post were surveyed regarding their preferences for the program. They were asked to establish a basic goal and philosophy for the course and to answer questions regarding the course format, content, tone, and instructional methods. It was hoped that the survey would provide a direction for the program which would suit it to the needs of the supporting chaplains. Results of the survey are recorded in Table 1.

The same survey was administered in November 1975, to insure that we were still on the right track. Results of that survey are also shown in Table 1.

Responses to the surveys revealed that the Ft. Lewis chaplains were generally pleased with the outcomes of the program. Responses were analyzed and a philosophy was developed for the course which was consistent with the chaplains' expressed preferences. Those who have participated in the conduct of the course during the past year have attempted to make the tone, content, and methods of their instruction follow closely the guidelines set by the responding chaplains.

### Philosophy of the Program

The Marriage Preparation Course is conceived to be a *supplement to individual counseling* which a chaplain may contract with the couple anticipating marriage. It is *not* intended to diminish the contribution of the chaplain primarily involved with the couple. Its aim is strictly educational while the function of the individual chaplain may include some therapeutic goals. The program is designed to bring together the insights of other professionals to support and amplify the contribution of

Table 1

	1974	1975
—Number of chaplains responding: ----- (Some chaplains marked more than one category in each section.)	21	19
	Yes No	Yes No
—Is there a continuing need for the Marriage Preparation Course? -----	20 1	19 0
—Should the length and scheduling of the sessions be changed? -----	2 19	4 15
—Which of the content areas listed below do you think should be emphasized?		
Spiritual Aspects of Marriage		
—Biblical basis for marriage: -----	11	9
—Explication of different forms or levels of love: -----	11	5
—Clarification of spiritual/ethical values: -----	17	13
—Surfacing and sharing of spiritual commitment: -----	13	10
Financial/Legal Aspects of Marriage		
—Basic budgeting and family income: -----	18	16
—Legal aspects of marriage: -----	10	8
—Information on helping resources available: -----	19	12
Communication		
—Clarification of values regarding communication: -----	11	6
—Common interaction patterns and disfunctions: -----	16	9
—Basic relationship skills: -----	19	13
Physical Aspects of Marriage		
—Sex and marriage: -----	18	12
—Methods of contraception: -----	11	5
—Health, hygiene, and weight control: -----	9	3
—Relationship between physical and emotional health: -----	19	13
Should the tone of the course be primarily:		
—Optimistic, jovial, and celebrative: -----	12	10
—Serious and task oriented: -----	12	10
—Warning and cautious: -----	2	1
Should the methods of the course be primarily:		
—Instructional/informational (lecture): -----	11	10
—Informal discussions: -----	16	10
—Experimental: -----	8	4
Do you think the course leader should perform:		
evaluative functions: -----	6	3
diagnostic functions: -----	2	3

the chaplain primarily involved. The program should reduce the time required for each individual chaplain to help a couple prepare for marriage.

A helpful analogy is the breakdown between "branch" and "common" subjects in all military schools. Branch subjects are those which apply directly to the primary role of the person being trained. Common subjects are those which apply to all persons in the military. In the marriage preparation process, topics which relate specifically to the intimate needs of any couple are best covered in individual counseling with the primary chaplain. The Marriage Preparation Course treats only those topics which are common to all marriage relationships. It is, therefore, a "common subjects" supplement to individual premarital counseling.

The Marriage Preparation Course is also conceived to be a *forum* where *critical issues* regarding the marriage relationship can be surfaced and explored in a safe and facilitative environment with the help of trained resource individuals. Topics relating to communication, religion, finances, and sex are broached and discussed since they are subjects which many couples do not discuss in the normal course of dating and courtship. Religious and ethical values are prioritized, communication skills practiced, and basic budgets formulated. Homework assignments are viewed primarily as discussion starters to assist couples to continue the dialogue on critical issues between class periods. Participation and sharing are encouraged. Care is taken, however, to avoid any pressure on participants to "open up" to the group. As has been mentioned, the course is an educational forum and not a vehicle for therapy. In the experience of the authors, however, many couples have shared openly and have confided later that group discussions made strong impacts on their own thinking and attitudes. Ideally, those who have completed the four sessions are better prepared for marriage because they have been equipped with some basic skills and have already worked through some critical issues in the marriage relationship.

The Marriage Preparation Course is also regarded as an *arena for professional and collegial sharing*, where social service professionals compare insights and techniques which are helpful for marriage. The program has utilized the resources of a number of different agencies at Ft. Lewis. Eleven chaplains are currently involved in the conduct of the program. Ten of them recently attended a two-day marriage enrichment seminar with their wives to extend or update their training in preparation for their contribution to the course. Similar training opportunities are planned for the future.

### Survey of Reactions by Course Graduates

Having deliberately clarified the philosophy of the program, along with the preferred format, content, tone, and method, we attempted to measure our effectiveness by surveying the course participants who

graduated during a substantial part of 1975. A summary of the survey responses from the first seventy-five graduates of the year is given in Table 2.

It is clear from the survey that the general response of participants was positive. The survey also reveals those subjects which the participants saw as most useful. An obvious gap in the data appears when we asked the question, "But what did the participants feel who failed to complete the course?" We have no ready answer for that question, though the reasons why people fail to complete the course will be treated later in the article.

### Lessons Learned from the Marriage Preparation Course

In addition to the rather scant material data recorded in Tables 1 and 2, observations by the authors and other contributors to the course have yielded some very useful insights into the conduct of a program such as that being described here.

Group integrity is important to the quality and volume of participation in the class setting. We have noticed that during some monthly cycles the membership of the group remained fairly constant. During these periods, participants shared more freely and seemed to feel the classes were more rewarding. During other cycles there was a high rate of participant turnover. In effect, any couple who attended on a given night might find themselves in a totally new group from the previous meeting. We observed that this turnover inhibited free and open sharing and that the couples were accordingly less satisfied with the classes.

Additionally, the differences between the couples tend to influence the course's effectiveness. During the same evening there might be a junior officer in the group with his intended spouse, who is a college graduate, and a private, E-1, with his 16-year-old fiancée. The same group might contain intelligent, highly-verbal couples along with dull, practically non-verbal couples. Obviously, this presents a difficult challenge to the instructor/facilitator. A great deal of flexibility is required if participatory learning methods are to be used. It was a surprise to some of the instructors to discover the high degree of sophistication among most couples in the physiological aspects of the sexual relationship. Often participating doctors found that they could tell couples almost nothing about the mechanics of sex which they didn't already know. As a consequence, we shifted from talking about physiology and contraception to discussions about the mental and emotional outcomes of healthy sexual relationships. Participants responded positively to that change.

We had a great deal of difficulty determining why some couples failed to complete the Marriage Preparation Course. We have no numerical statistics to support our conclusions, but a partial follow-up indicated that many of the drop-outs also terminated their counseling relationships with the primary chaplains. Incidental conversations with some

**Table 2**

You have just completed four sessions of the Marriage Preparation Class. I would like to ask you for some of your impressions about the class.

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Do you feel that there is enough value in the course to warrant the effort and time required? ----- Yes: 65 No: 3

---

Which of these major areas in the course do you feel should receive the greatest attention:

- Spiritual aspects of marriage: ----- 4
- Financial/legal aspects of marriage: ----- 18
- Communication in the marriage relationship: ----- 36
- Physical/sexual aspects of marriage: ----- 11

Which do you feel has been most helpful to you?

- Spiritual: ----- 15
  - Financial: ----- 15
  - Communication: ----- 41
  - Physical: ----- 15
- 

One of the major goals of the course is to help young couples get to know more about each other with regard to the areas listed above.

Do you feel that the course helped you to understand your partner and your relationship to him/her better? ----- Yes: 63 No: 4

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Which of the sessions was most helpful in exploring areas which you hadn't spent much time talking about or sharing to that point in your relationship?

- Spiritual: ----- 16
  - Financial: ----- 9
  - Communications: ----- 32
  - Physical: ----- 11
- 

Would you describe the tone of the course as . . .

- Happy and optimistic: ----- 33
  - Serious and task oriented: ----- 31
  - Warning and cautious: ----- 11
- 

Do you feel there was adequate opportunity for you and your partner to participate? ----- Yes: 63 No: 2

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drop-outs led us to believe that a substantial number of them decided, through their initial participation in the course, that they were not yet ready to marry or were not well suited to one another. Other couples decided that their commitment to a "church wedding" had more of a social than a spiritual basis and chose to be married elsewhere. (We must hasten to interject that the goal of the program is not to discourage couples from marrying nor to police inappropriate motives.) Others doubtlessly leave because they find no benefit in attending, are bored, or disinterested.

### Future Directions

We intend to continue as well as to upgrade and improve the content and presentation of the Marriage Preparation Course at Ft. Lewis. We are moving specifically in the following directions:

1. To expand the multiple resource base for the program. We want to provide more intensive training for interested chaplains and to continue calling upon other social service agencies for their assistance. We have already begun to train and utilize chaplain assistants in paraprofessional roles.
2. To provide follow-up opportunities for course graduates. This would involve six-month and yearly checkups in the form of weekend workshops which provide continuing exposure to educational and therapeutic content relevant to growth-oriented relationships. The motto of the course is that "marriage preparation begins when you plan to marry, and should never end."

### Conclusion

The Marriage Preparation Course at Ft. Lewis has proven to be of great value in our pastoral ministry to young couples. Its success is dependent upon a broad resource base and active chaplain support post-wide. It is a viable and effective supplement to premarital counseling by individual chaplains.



# A THEOLOGY I BELIEVE: A THEOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Chaplain (COL) Eugene E. Allen

The basic need of man is centered around his feeling of inadequacy and inability to find self-acceptance.

In theological terminology this is man's sin, his original sin. It is seen in the story of Adam and Eve. There was an unwillingness to accept themselves and their state and a consequent willingness to accept Satan's bargain. He could make them "to become as gods," to rise above the self-imposed dislike of themselves as they saw it. God, however, intended it to be a world of Grace—where man has all—and does nothing to gain his love. Man could not accept the Self; this nonacceptance became the central and pivotal problem. For this the Christ came; for this God's Grace is given. However, this is so central and so much to the core of man's nature and fabric that he becomes blind and numb to his own problem. He begins to make God not the Savior from his sin but the perpetuator of his need. He manipulates God into becoming the clout that beats his sense of inadequacy. God established, in his mind, impossible and unreachable goals, standards and commandments. These do not serve to enrich his life but to condemn his life. They confirm what he has always known: that he is inadequate.

Herein lies the struggle of Romans 7. Paul cannot accept the self. He cannot do the things he wants to do. The Law is a schoolteacher that has greatly confirmed what he had known all along: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

The schoolteacher (Law) finally presses him to the wall and he cries out, "O wretched man that I am!"

All of our lives we have been taught that if we *do* certain things we can *be* acceptable. This is the basic model of child raising. No matter how loving and nurturing the parent may be, he teaches the child to perform in an acceptable way. The child learns to be acceptable; he must *do* certain things.

Many psychologists suggest that religion is nothing but a transferred relationship from childhood—we make our parents God. The terminology and structure of most Christian worship experiences validate this theory.

Oftentimes in Christian worship, the worshipper sees himself unworthy and unfit but God can take care of his unfit condition if he fulfills

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a certain standard or requirement. This is the earliest and most infantile feeling. Everything the little baby desires is at the discretion of the parent. He cannot feed himself or take care of his most elementary needs. It does not take long to reach the conclusion that he is rather inadequate and unworthy. This is not an intellectual assent, but a definite and certain emotional stance. No one can escape his emotional self-analysis. Although man often tries to evade this self-estimation, it becomes a haunting voice constantly whispering into his soul. He tries to evade through the attainment of certain external symbols—credentials—which are often earnest efforts to prove to himself that he is worthy, that he is adequate. Still the haunting voice plagues him.

What about this voice? What is one to do about this inner feeling of emptiness? There comes a nearly reflex answer from deep in the feeling level of his psyche: "I must please God! I must do the things that he demands! It worked with my parents and it helped my feelings of unworthiness. It will work again."

The man who sees God as his parents searches for that which God wants of him. Clear answers are given him: recognize your sin, repent, accept Christ as your Savior, and live a life worthy of his salvation and his name. "Ah," the Christian says, "this is Grace."

Yet, behold this "Grace." It is merely a reflex of the old emotional stance in a different "bag." Repentance is usually understood as "being sorry." Yet there is a level at which it is also understood as involving a requirement. The individual begins to ask, "How much *doing* is required?—How about the sin factor?—How clear and long will my list of duties be?" Jesus' acceptance becomes parental acceptance: He loves you, will make you a new person—if you obey.

The world is full of guilty souls trying to satisfy their empty, inadequate lives. Their so-called "gospel" only compounds their guilt and inadequacy by offering a cheap grace reinforced by old parent-child relationships. They continue to search for new credentials, symbols of adequacy (*i.e.* serving the church, entering the ministry, becoming a deacon, "saving souls").

On the other hand, the positive affirmation of Grace by man is a feeling of real personal worth and acceptance. Jesus saw the wandering masses of man laboring under the yoke of false credentials—seeking to prove their worthiness through a code of law. He cried out: "Come to me, all you that labor and are heavy laden . . . for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Jesus, the Christ, offers no external symbols or credentials. He offers free Grace. God's Grace is a great surprise. It is foreign to our normal instincts, our natural reflexes, and our emotional gratifications standards. He says, 'You do nothing; you act in no particular way. Your acceptance is simply your acknowledgment that I am yours, that I accept you.'

The fruits of the Grace of God are a sense of personal acceptance, an

attitude of reality, authenticity, warmth, and unvarnished personal projection. Proving oneself to one's neighbor is no longer a need. You are acceptable. Now you want to be real, to be honest with your fellow man, because your fellow man is no longer unacceptable or a "filthy rag" but as acceptable as you are acceptable. God's Grace gives you a taste of true reality. Between you and him there is no false piety or superficial religiosity. You communicate about things as they are. You find yourself saying: "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." For in every man there is a lot of both belief and unbelief, courage and fear, hope and hopelessness. You no longer feel a need to deny such conflicts. You say to God: "Let's work on these ambiguities together. Let the Christ so live in me that I might become as real as he is, as loving as he is. I no longer have a need to evade my feelings, because you have accepted all of me."

What a sense of freedom it offers! What a possibility of excitement it gives! You are free from the "old man" and find a new life, a "new man." You shake off the "old Adam!"

So God, by his Grace, gives us a glimpse of eternity. It is an "eternal now!" It is not something that begins out there. It is being free from that which would destroy our hope of seeing reality and life!

Let me interject a thought about the word "search." God's intervention into man's experience through Grace cannot be summed up in a little package or by some treatise. Search is always the Christian adventure—not with an end to prove or to gain esteem, but for the pure joy of discovering more. All through the party given in his honor, I am sure the Prodigal Son kept saying something like, "Boy! What a surprise, I did not expect this! What does this mean for my life? How can I find the deeper aspects of its reality, its love, its meaning?" His experience of Grace must have encouraged him to search.

In the terminology of Transactional Analysis, the "Parent Ego State" gives the definition of one's perception of God. Normally, the "Parent" writes the script and sends messages to the "Child" as to how his life is to be lived. They are demanding and nurturing messages. The Child receives them and adapts and reacts in either submissive or rebellious ways.

Salvation is being accepted without any "ifs," "shoulds," or "oughts." For years our Child Ego State has had to submit to these "oughts." Now God, through his Son, grants Grace. It is the Child that feels this blessing and freedom because it is the Child who experienced the inner restlessness, false hopes, and uselessness of life.

Paul Tillich once wrote:

It strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us. It strikes us when, year after year, the longed for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage [when we tire of submitting to the Parent Messages]. A wave of light breaks into

our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying, "You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know." Do not seek for anything, do not perform anything, do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted. If this happens we experience Grace [the Child accepts].<sup>1</sup>

Grace frees the Child from the laws of normal existence, the demands of the Parent. For the first time, the Child is liberated. He feels the joy of his humanity. He feels pride in his being. Becoming accepted, he comes to accept himself. He begins to feel "O.K." He feels "O.K." about his sexuality, his ambitions, his drives, his love for life. He finds self autonomy. He becomes an uncontaminated adult.

Look at the religious experiences of cheap grace. I believe it can be demonstrated clinically that what most people call "God" is nothing more than their Parent Ego State. They are not free. They live under a Parent script. As Berne noted, they are like individuals at a player piano—appearing to be playing the instrument, but having little or no control.

Time and again I have had troubled people talk about God with an obvious perception of their Parent Ego State. One lady thought she was "losing God." When she was four years old, her father had died of a heart attack at her feet while scolding her. A young man, whose demanding mother could never be satisfied, had spent much of his early life hiding in his bedroom. Now he wanted to commit suicide because he could not live up to the "precepts of God." In her childhood, another of my counselees had a father who left a note on her breakfast plate listing her duties for the day. Now she was opening her Bible each morning with closed eyes, pointing her finger and discovering "God's will for her that day." The list of people worshipping their Parent Ego State could go on for pages.

Unfortunately, the church has often encouraged this state. Preaching often comes from the pastor's Parent Ego State. He is demanding and often causes the parishioner to feel guilty, little, and inadequate. Since this confirms the feelings already held, the parishioner congratulates the preacher: "It was a good sermon, you really stepped on my toes." We hear it in their confessions or when they "walk the aisle." Rarely is there an affirmation of God's Grace and goodness—only agreements that they are "not O.K." Some churches have become communities of "not O.K." people whose fermenting guilt is acted out in dissension, anger, and division. To them, Grace was presented like geometry—a lot of laws and a few hypotheses. They have defined every step of the way with Christ and meticulously charted how you "should" or "ought" to respond. They have not listened to the "wind"—*Ruach*—Spirit. Submission is called "salvation" and rebellion is called "denial of the faith."

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<sup>1</sup> Tillich, Paul. *The Shaking of the Foundations* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948).

Those who eventually snub their noses at the church have not forsaken God's Grace. Often, they are merely struggling with their Parent. Feeling empty and useless, they seek other symbols to confirm their adequacy (*i.e.* materialism, "holy" causes, or overt rebellion/submission to society).

I am not proposing that one has to know Transactional Analysis to be saved. I simply believe it offers an interesting way to interpret the Christian experience. It offers the pastoral counselor a communicative vehicle to help the troubled person.

Inherent in the freeing of any Child must be the protection, the permission and potency of Grace—"for by Grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God."

Our Lord said, "Unless you become as a child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God." In counseling sessions with fellow Christians the counselee will often say that he is afraid. He has a right to be. It is a fearful thing, as a Child, to be free from your Parent messages.

So the counselor must offer more than himself, or his theories in T.A. He must continue to offer that transcendent power—the Grace of God. The Child Ego State then begins to feel the joy, the peace, the freedom of Grace. He is justified, not by *doing* but by *being*.

Of course, the archaic Parent messages will continue to corrupt and slow his progress to the Adult. But only by Grace can he feel the permission to be free and the potency to find fulfillment.

Inherent in the freeing of any Child must be the protection, the permission, and the potency of the Grace of God. This need not be overwhelming or stifling. Quite to the contrary, it is the doorway to the joy of humanity. Becoming free, one comes to accept himself. Only with true self-acceptance can one accept another.





# BETTER HEALTH—HEBRAICALLY!

Chaplain (LTC) Allan M. Blustein

In this agonizing age of ballooning bills for medical and dental care, how would you like a free prescription offering the optimum in physical well-being for you and your family? How would you feel about obtaining, free of charge a treasure-house of guidance on what to do and what not to do, so that good health becomes a new tenant in your home while ill health moves out of the neighborhood? Indeed, such phenomena are possible through a detailed and thorough study of the accumulated wisdom of the ages, as collected and codified into the body of literature known as the "Prepared Table (*SHULCHAN ARUCH*) of Hebraic Law."

In Judaism, all laws, whether civil or criminal are considered equally sacred and binding on man inasmuch as they emanate from Divine Authority. Jewish law, as such, regulates and controls every act, every movement of a person from birth to death. It prescribes the manner in which one should eat, drink, walk, talk, think, learn, and conduct every aspect of life regardless of its degree of importance. This "formula" for living developed over countless centuries, taking seed with the Pentateuch, flowering with the Talmud and Codes, and culminating with the *SHULCHAN ARUCH* of a sixteenth century rabbi, Joseph Caro. At once, the work represents a Herculean effort to harness the legal matter, the experience, the wisdom, the practical advice stored away in every nook and cranny of the existence of a people. Of special interest to anyone seeking the elusive boon of good health is the section which deals with the physical well-being and how to keep it that way.

## DIGESTION

As a kind of preface, the SA advises a person to shun things that tend to harm his body while acquiring those habits that make for good health. "Take you therefore good heed of your souls," the Bible advises (Deuteronomy 4:15). Man was created with a natural warmth (temperature) which is maintained with the fuel of food. If this food or fuel is absent or deficient in anyway, then the warmth might flicker out with disastrous consequences. It follows that each limb and organ selects for itself that portion of the fuel which suits it while rejecting the remaining waste or residue for elimination from the body. If this waste is allowed to remain, it could rot away and cause much illness, both internally and externally. Logically then, good food, easily digested, enhances the overall health while poor food, poorly digested, diminishes it. If the digestion becomes weak, the person can come to a dangerous state.

Digestion is easier when the amount of food taken is small. An overloaded stomach can't spread out and shrink properly so that the

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food can be ground by the gastric juices. Most illness comes either from eating unwholesome food or excessive amounts of wholesome food. One of the sages quoted in the SA cautions that "He who eats little from harmful food is not as much harmed as he who eats excessively from wholesome food." During youth, the digestive system is strong; therefore, more regular meals are the order of the day, but as the body ages, less quantity with more quality is the prescription. The heat during hot summer days weakens the digestive system necessitating smaller portions of food than that taken on cooler days. A proper guideline dictates eating only two thirds of a normal cool day's fare on warm ones.

A person ought to exercise (by walking or by work) before dining. Loosening the belt is advisable before eating, as is sitting rather than standing. If a person must recline during a meal, he or she should do it on the left side. After the meal, a person should not promenade or tire himself out nor should he take a nap immediately. A period of two hours is needed to insure that gases do not enter the brain, causing injury. Additionally, it isn't good to take a bath or engage in sexual intercourse too soon after eating!

People differ in their temperaments: some are hot; some are cold; and some are medium. The wise person eats those foods which are slightly opposite his own temperament. For example, a soul with a hot temperament should eat foods like fruits and most vegetables but avoid things like spices and balsom plants, while a cool-hand-luke type ought to take moderately warm foods. In the summer one should eat such items as lamb, goat, and chicken, but in winter the best foods are those that heat the body. A cold climate calls for warming foods, while a warm or tropical climate necessitates cooling ones.

The best kind of bread one can eat is a wheaten type not baked with too fine a flour; because the finer the flour, the longer the digestive process must take. The bread should contain some bran, be moderately leavened and salted, then baked in an oven. Other foods made from wheat are not advised. The best meat is from young animals, lambs, calves, etc., but intestines and the head are not good to eat. Old cows, goats, and aged cheese make bad and heavy food which taxes the bodily functions. Poultry is much easier to digest than cattle-meat and the best fowl of all is hen. One should never eat the heart of an animal or fowl because it harms the memory. The same is true of any food which has been partially eaten by a feline or a rodent.

Generally, a healthy and strong person should eat twice a day while those along in years should eat small amounts several times a day so as not to tax the stomach. If one wishes to preserve his physical condition, he or she should not eat until the stomach is emptied of the previous food. The usual time for digestion of food, for people who eat moderate foods and engage in moderate exercises, is six hours. It's advised to refrain from eating at least one meal each week to enable the stomach to rest, thereby strengthening its digestive power. A good rule to re-

member is that since digestion begins by means of grinding the food with the teeth, thereby intermixing it with the juice of the saliva, one should not swallow any food without thorough mastication first.

## FOODS CLASSIFIED

Since all people differ in their temperament, it follows that each should select food which is in accord with the character, climate, and time. Some foods are extremely harmful and one should usually refrain from eating them, *e.g.*, large stale salted fish, stale salted cheese, old salted meat, wine fresh from the press, and cooked food which has lost its flavor. Likewise, any food which has a bad odor or bitter taste is generally poison to the body. There are also foods which, being injurious, are still not as bad as those listed earlier. These are: large fish; cheese, milk that has stood twenty-four hours after the milking; meat of large oxen or billy goats; barley bread; unleavened bread; cabbage; leeks; onions; garlic; mustard and radish. Such items should be eaten sparingly, if at all, and only in the winter at that—never in summer! Some other harmful foods are: water-fowl; little young pigeons; dates; bread kneaded in oil; and fine flour which no longer has any bran in it because of over-sifting.

Fruits on the other hand are very interesting foods. One is advised to abstain from over-eating of fruits of trees, even when they are dried. Before turning ripe, they are as swords on the membranes of the stomach. Carob is always bad, as are acidulous fruits. On the other hand, figs, grapes, almonds and pomegranates are always wholesome, whether fresh or dried, and may be eaten to one's satisfaction. Yet one should not use them as a daily fare.

## DRINKING

Water is the natural drink for man and healthful to the body. If it is clean and pure, it preserves the moisture of the body and hastens elimination of worthless matter. Cool water satisfies the thirst and helps the digestion more than water which is not cold. Moderation, again, is the key-note, since water which is too cold quenches the natural warmth of the body. Thus when a person is tired and weary he should be very careful not to drink cold water which has an adverse effect on the fat of the heart, already hot from the exertion. Still in all, water should not be drunk to excess even though it is good for the health. One should refrain from drinking water before a meal because it cools the stomach and impairs digestion. In the middle of the meal one should likewise drink only a little water mixed with wine, and only when the food begins to be digested should a moderate amount be taken. One should also refrain from drinking water in and upon leaving the bath-house since this can hurt the liver. Similarly after sexual intercourse, it is wise to abstain from water so as not to impair the natural warmth of the body.

Wine preserves the natural warmth, improves digestion, brings out

extraneous matter and helps the physical health if drunk in moderation, of course. The one who has a weak head should keep away from wine, because it adds to his weakness and fills his head with gases. Wine is good for the aged but injurious to the young, since it increases the natural warmth and is similar to adding fire to fire. Therefore, it's advisable to abstain from wine up to the age of twenty-one. Wine should be drunk immediately before a meal (but only a little) in order to open up the intestines; it should not be drunk when hungry, nor after a bath, nor after perspiring, nor after being tired or weary. During meals it should be drunk sparingly.

A person should only eat when hungry and drink only when thirsty and should not neglect the call of nature for one moment. Before a meal, it behooves the individual to ascertain whether such a call will be imminent. The bowels should always be kept lax, even so far as to approach a diarrhetic state, for constipation can lead to serious diseases. Therefore when a person senses that the bowels are weakened and unable to work themselves, a doctor should be consulted for cure. Weariness in a moderate degree is good for the physical health, but too much weariness or rest is injurious to the body. A stout person needs more exercise than does a lean person.

## EMOTIONS AND HEALTH

One who desires to preserve the health must become acquainted with the psychological emotions and take care of them. Chief among these are: joy; worry; anger; and fear. The wise person is always satisfied with his portion in life and should not grieve over a world that does not belong to him. He should be in good spirits, happy to a moderate extent because these cause the increase of the natural warmth, digestion of food, elimination of waste, while strengthening the eyesight and faculties and boning the intellectual powers. But one should be careful not to increase the joy of life by means of food or drink, as the foolish people do, because the natural warmth becomes dissolved, cooling off the heart, thereby possibly causing premature fatality. This is especially true with obese persons because their natural warmth is bad to begin with (due to excess weight) and the ensuing condition of narrowed blood vessels (decreasing the circulation) does not benefit the individual. Grief, like joy, is also harmful because it cools off the body and centralizes the natural heat into the heart which may cause death. Anger rouses the body warmth and can produce fever. Fright causes coolness in the body, thereby causing the person to shiver which is another state harmful to the body mechanisms.

Sleep in moderation is beneficial because it aids digestion, rests one's senses, and restores strength. Excessive sleep fills the head with gases and can cause injury. One should not sleep when one is hungry because the warmth works to excess and will produce gases which go to the head. While asleep, a person's head should be higher than the rest of the

body, thereby diminishing any flow of gas to the head and aiding the food to go down to the stomach and beyond. Natural sleep occurs during the night. Sleep during daylight hours is harmful and is only good for those who are accustomed to it.

An individual should always try to reside where the air is pure, the ground is elevated and in a house of ample proportions. Beneficial air should be at an even temperature, neither cold nor hot. Therefore it's advisable not to overheat a house in winter-time, as many senseless people do, because the excessive heat can bring on sickness. It should be heated only enough to prevent the cold from being felt.

## EYESIGHT

To preserve the eyesight, one should guard against the following: going from a dark place to a well illuminated place suddenly; doing the reverse suddenly; reading or writing at dusk, twilight, or at noon; doing work by candlelight at night; gazing steadily at bright red colors or at fire; encountering smoke, sulphurous fumes, dust, or excessive wind. One should not read or write from light reflected from the sun but should strive for direct lighting from any source.

## HAZARDOUS COMBINATIONS

One should not eat fish together with meat (even poultry fat) because it is dangerous. If one does eat meat and immediately thereafter fish or vice-versa, he should be sure to eat some bread and drink a beverage between them so as to wash the food down and rinse his mouth. One should not drink any uncovered water. One should always beware of things which are dangerous because regulations concerning health and life are made more stringent than ritual law; the risk of peril is greater than the infringement of a precept. Therefore, one should not walk in a dangerous place, nor alone at night, nor sleep alone at night. One should refrain from drinking water from rivers at night, lest he swallow something harmful. One who has bowel troubles should not place a vessel of hot water on the abdomen. This is dangerous. One is also forbidden to cross a stream when the water is rising; if it reaches above his loins he is in danger of being swept away.

There are many laws concerning the ban on cooking or eating meat and milk, or any of their derivatives, together. This is a cardinal regulation in Scripture and must be adhered to scrupulously.

In summary, we have seen the "waterfront" covered by Hebraic Law in its attempt to enable man to live a healthier life. Not all the advice is scientifically sound, but it has stood the test of time. In most cases we might say: "Try it, you'll like it!" You might even find that it works!



# THE PREACHER AS INTERPRETER

Bertram deH. Atwood, D.D.

Anton Rubenstein, the nineteenth century piano virtuoso, on tour in New York, was asked if he would like to go to church. He replied, "Yes, if you can take me to a preacher who will tempt me to do the impossible."

The plight of so much preaching in our day is not that a new and better way has been found for the Good News to be declared, but that we preachers too often give the impression that a sermon is expected to be dull, or moralistic, or safe. The excitement has departed and our name is Ichabod. We would do well to read—or re-read—Dorothy Sayres' *Creed or Chaos?* where she says that no mystery writer would dare to treat his theme the way preachers treat theirs . . . "the people who hanged Christ never, to do them justice, accused Him of being a bore; they thought Him too dynamic to be safe."

I said that preaching is often too moralistic . . . good advice instead of good news. Our sermons are full of "oughts," "musts," "shoulds." Don't we know, if there's any red blood in us, what converts and renews and claims us and others is not commandments but visions . . . being "tempted to do the impossible" because Christ insists that we are possible?

The preacher is an artist. Passion and hard work produce the images he hopes to communicate. The passion comes to large degree from Holy Spirit, though I would think that some of it comes from having worked hard and faithfully on the sermon until it begins to grab one's stomach muscles and make the pulse beat faster. I don't think a sermon is ready until the passion is aroused: but neither do I think that it will move until one has worked hours and even months on the theme. Brooding is essential; and that means note-books, wide reading, contemplation—yes, and prayer.

Nor must we forget that people come to church, more so now than in many a year, not out of custom or duty or from fear, but because they want God. They want to find ways to touch the Center, to be claimed by the One who can make life whole (holy?), to get life put together (saved?) by a vision of the Eternal. The sermon is not isolated, therefore, from the rest of the Service ("work"); but the words of the hymns, the nuances in the prayers, even the way announcements are given, will create an atmosphere where God may be heard—or even when He is hidden, one will leave with a desire to know Him.

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I'd like to spend most of the time in this article in giving "for instances" of how I've tried to "do" it, for whatever value it may have for someone else who will, of course, have his own way with palette and brush. But before that, there are things that I've got to say—to myself first, and then to anyone else who will listen:

(1) When speaking about Moses and the prophets, or about Jesus Christ and the God whom he Abba-tized, one has to feel the situation, see where one stands in relation to incident or teaching. That is, one has to take an existential stance so that it is real to us . . . and to our people. In *Rough Justice* by C. E. Montague (one of our least known but great novelists) Bron, a twelve-year old, goes to church for the first time. The pastor gives out a terrible piece of news, that a good man who had healed sick people and had spoken as no other even spoke, had been cruelly killed and there was something he wanted the people there in church that morning to do. Bron was excited and waited; but the people went out of church that morning and talked about the weather, and didn't act as if anything important had happened.

When, for example, we preach on the parables of Jesus, do we moralize or allegorize them, seek the "one point" which Jesus is trying to get across—or do we stop to realize that Jesus' words (as well as His deeds) precipitated a conflict that resulted in His Death? Do we make people see that Jesus' parables are interpreting His behavior, are part of the provocation of His conflict, that He risked His life through His word? What do we say to the person who opines, "I don't go to church but I believe that the Sermon on the Mount is the basis for right living?" Do we make others realize at all that the One who lived that kind of life died, that we are called to die, that loss of life is really a gaining of life? Do we really give a vision of "the difference between authentic and inauthentic existence, about what Jesus affirmed and what He rejected?"<sup>1</sup> Is the story flat and old-hat, and thus are we condemned?

(2) Tired and sanctimonious language has to go. So many of our words are loaded with familiarity and caution, or with religious hangovers. It's a good practise to go over our manuscripts and substitute a fresh word, give a new image, and certainly make it contemporary without being matey or condescending. (M. L. King in a sermon in St. Paul's, London, suggested that the Church has to present its message in the modern idiom, but when it undertakes to proclaim the gospel in a secular idiom it must beware lest it ends up proclaiming secularism in a Christian idiom!) I find that reading novels makes me study my language, understand more fully the passions and provocations our people endure, and most of all come to grips with the real questions they find being put to them in everyday traffic.

Indeed, the preacher isn't around to answer questions nobody today is asking. Rather, he is to ask the right questions. When Dr. Buttrick was

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<sup>1</sup> Via, Dan Otto, Jr. *The Parables* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967) p. 193.



Preacher to Harvard University, he 'phoned Archibald Macleish, visiting professor of poetry, to speak in morning chapel. Macleish shouted over the phone a resounding, "No!" A few minutes later he called back to apologize to Buttrick and said, "I just couldn't be such a hypocrite as to speak in chapel." (Little did he know that all preachers are perforce hypocrites.) The next day Macleish called again and said, "All right; I'll do it. But don't think I think Christianity has the answers we're looking for; but . . . it does ask the right questions." The right spirit in preaching comes from asking the right questions, so that people may be stabbed awake.

When we talk about Christ being the Answer, we ought to be indicating that the answer through Him is faith and trust: faith and trust that in confrontation with Him questions will be asked that make us delve more deeply into who we are and what life is meant to reveal. So we would create the atmosphere where our people can breathe free.

(3) The Bible has to be opened for our people. There is a lot of bibliolatry which preachers seem to encourage. The temptation is to choose a theme and hunt around for a text to sanctify it. We do not begin with the Bible but use it for our own ends. So it is our human voices that come through, and people can take it or leave it, depending on their prejudices. I'm all for reading the *New York Times* and *The Saturday Review*; but they only provide words through which the Word may be heard.

A book that every preacher ought to read is James Smart's *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church*. Smart contends that the Bible is unknown by our people because we preachers are superficial about the text and do not come clean about its composition, message, or the means of revelation. He tells of a village where three men, prominent in the local church, were standing in the street reviewing the church's situation, when a retired minister who had been their pastor years before joined them. They told him that their present pastor had a disturbing approach to the Bible and its interpretation. "Oh, we had it all in seminary fifty years ago," said the old preacher, to which one of the men responded, "Then why in hell didn't you tell us about it?" He had preached in the village church for years without saying anything that would help people come clean in their theological perspectives.<sup>2</sup> To my mind it is dishonest to keep the Bible hidden in a pious vacuum; and it may be for this reason that preaching lacks authenticity and fails to reveal what God had to say in our time and place.

Let me be more specific, as I promised. Suppose you're trying to speak about the plagues in Egypt (Exodus 7 ff.). I had to preach about it lately because a parent came to me to ask about the story which had been taught in church school the previous Sunday. In my sermon I said, "I have to say in all honesty that the story of the plagues disturbs me. Is

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<sup>2</sup> Smart, James D. *Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971) p. 69.

this the God I am asked to worship? (God is reported to have said, 'I have made sport of the Egyptians to let them know who I am . . . .') Is God a not-so-benevolent Dictator, committed to foul means to clean up frustrating situations? Do we expect miraculous interventions and God sending fire and wrath from heaven? We have to make up our minds whether God is one who sends plagues and goes on a rampage, or whether He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Did God change his tactics, so that what He did in an earlier period He later on refused to countenance? Otherwise our explanations are only apologies for God's bad behavior. Does God need our apologies or defense?"

Further on: "It was natural for them to try to explain what had happened. None of us likes to be left in the dark. We want to unravel mysteries, for human nature is incurably curious. So you can understand how the traditions grew up as the story of deliverance was told year after year. Any good story-teller elaborates. Don't we have to come to this principle: *Experience and explanation are not the same thing*. The experience was their deliverance out of Egypt by God's hand. The explanation was too simple in the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The miracle was that the slaves were delivered out of Egypt. The explanation was the best they could come up with at the time. Better had they said, 'We don't know.' When we try to take away the mystery with too much explanation, we only destroy the meaning.

"If you asked me what was the miracle God wrought in Egypt, I would say that the miracle was Moses, not the plagues. Why did this man, brought up in a palace, exchange his safety for the suffering he endured? How is it that slaves and ghetto folk had the right to a new deal, found the dignity that itself was a promise? The miracle is that their new-found dignity involved them in suffering for a purpose beyond themselves . . . .

"We ask for a miracle! The miracle is that in the face of Moses' forcefulness and courage and integrity, in his utter belief that the plight of the down-trodden people was God's cause—that before this cause Pharaoh was helpless. The costly act of self-investment was the miracle God wrought, the way God delivered His people. In every age God raises up men and women who stand strong against injustice and cry for a new deal. The question is, 'By what means can life be renewed and redeemed?' But there is a further question: 'What way has God established for making a family out of discordant and disobedient tribes?' It depends, doesn't it, on where we put our trust, in whom we believe . . . ultimately?"

Event and Interpretation . . . Experience and Explanation: how important it is to raise these questions for our people, so that they can grapple with their own plagues; that they may know that their pastor knows from his own experience that doubt itself is the pathway to a deeper revelation of the Mystery.

Since earliest child-hood, when my father read the Bible to us at the dinner table, the story of Elijah at Mount Carmel has bothered me (I Kings 18 and 19). I thought, even as a child, that Elijah's killing of the false prophets was wicked and indefensible. I felt that he had prostituted religion by taking into his own hands what was safe only in God's.

So I had to preach on my own doubts. When I used the principle of Event and Interpretation, I discovered (at least for my own I-Thou give and take) that "The point of the contest on Mt. Carmel is that one religion is not so good as another. Religious differences do matter. The God of Israel is not just one God among many . . . so, 'How long will you go limping between two opinions? If Yahweh is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.' I don't think we understand the Old Testament until we see that it was written to show that religion is not a smörgåsbord, choosing a little of this and that.

"But it is dangerous and idolatrous to assume from this that we have the inside track and must defend God. I shudder to think of the things people have done in the name of God. Witness Calvin in Geneva conspiring Servetus' death, or Cotton Mather and the 'witches' of Salem. In Elijah's case he was not content to let God conclude the contest. He wiped out his enemies. He couldn't trust God to deal with enemies; he wanted neat solutions. He wanted to prove the superiority of his God . . . to show Him off, make Him incontestable, have Him act as any decent God should. A lot of us end up like Elijah!

"At long last God came to Elijah: 'not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, not in the fire. After all these came a still, small voice . . . .' This voice is not conscience, which depends so much on what it is tuned in to. The still, small voice says to us, as it did to Elijah, as it did to Abraham and Jeremiah, 'What are you doing here?' It chides us for our deafness to God's footsteps now, and makes us forego self-pity and quiet desperation. Abraham Lincoln, that lonely man, said to those who were sure of their answers, 'With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right . . . let us . . . .'

"The Bible comes alive when you question it, and are not content to brush the questions aside by saying, 'Have faith!' For faith starts a journey, a not knowing whither, but only knowing with Whom."<sup>3</sup>

We have to tease the text, carry on a conversation in depth with Scripture, sit where our congregations sit daily, look at it from the point of view of the sceptic in us as well as the sceptics in and out of the church. There is nothing worse than assuming that we tell the old, old story as if there was no new word from the Lord.

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<sup>3</sup> Sermon by B. deH. Atwood in *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Vol. 68, No. 2 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Theological Seminary, 1975) pp. 64 ff.

Or have you ever tried to have your people do some profound New Testament exegesis? You'll be surprised at how they take to it. Let them look with you at Mark 4:35-41 and compare it with Mark 6:45-52. The two stories are similar in some ways. In both, a group of disciples are in a boat and there is a storm. Both incidents follow a period when Jesus has been with crowds of people, and He wants to get away. In both stories Jesus plays the part of savior. But notice the differences, for they tell us something important for Mark. In the first story, Jesus is in the boat with the disciples when the storm breaks. In the second, Jesus is up in the hills alone, His disciples having gone to sea without Him. Jesus sees the storm and goes out to them walking on the water. In the first story Mark is telling us about the human Jesus. The second story, I would think, is a re-placed resurrection appearance. Mark wants us to know not only the human Jesus but the risen Christ.

Both stories are memories of real storms; but they are used symbolically and imaginatively. We are not being asked, "Did it happen just like this?" We are being searched: "Who do *you* think He was . . . is? What is the meaning behind the events for you?" Suppose you went to New York to see the Tall Ships on July 4. It was an event everyone talked about, saw on television. But suppose you met a girl there who got under your skin and you've seen her every weekend since. If things go on as they are, then the Tall Ships will have an altogether different meaning for you than for the rest of us. I think that that's what Mark has done. He's trying to look at the stories of two storms from the inside. He's saying that Jesus made something happen that is more than outward event. He is savior in more than calming the sea.

In the first story Jesus, tired, puts himself in their hands. They were the sailors, the competent ones, and He was the passenger. It's their chance to serve Him. The winds rise, the boat fills up with water, and there is Jesus asleep. "Wake up!" they cry, "don't you care if we perish?" It's no time for idle hands. They call Jesus "rabbi" but He doesn't raise a hand to help. Rather He goes to the cause of their problem: "Why are you afraid? Haven't you got faith?" The storm subsides, or we might say, Jesus overcomes their fears. But afterwards they begin to change their ideas about Jesus: "Who is this that even wind and wave obey Him?" They are confronted by the mystery of Jesus.

If the other story is possibly a resurrection appearance, as I think it is, it has to be read in connection with what went on immediately before, and clarifies it. Jesus had finished feeding the five thousand, had broken bread and distributed it among them. Then, almost immediately, He left the crowds and sent His disciples off by boat to go across the lake, while He went up into the hills alone to pray. When the storm broke, and the boat was filling with water, Jesus observed their distress and went to them. In this story Jesus takes the initiative. It is night and dark; and when Jesus comes, they think it is a ghost. They see Him and are

terrified. Mark adds the comment, "Their minds were closed, because they had not understood what Jesus had done in feeding the five thousand." In other words, didn't Jesus promise that He would come when needed, and that no barrier of time or space could stop Him?

Mark is talking about this strange Paradox called Jesus Christ. The first story is about the human teacher who gets tired and knows our limitations first-hand . . . He's in the same boat as we. The second is the unexpected disclosure of one who takes the initiative and calls for a commitment of a deep kind. A reader of the New Testament ought to feel suddenly that this is not magic; but it is a mystery. Jesus didn't take away all their tensions and stress. But at the same time He is one who gives us power to face them, and the courage to fight against them. He gives us "peace at the heart of endless agitation."

Last fall we visited again York Cathedral in England. It was a foggy morning and it was hard to find one's way through the narrow streets. Inside the cathedral, however, I saw a great path of sunlight bathing the floor before the chancel, where the transept cuts the nave. Looking up, I realized that at that place the tower rose high above the fog and caught the sunlight, and brought it down to us. That's what Mark says in these two stories. Jesus is one like us, but He rises above our fog-boundness and "lets the face of God shine through."

This ought to help us see that we cannot dissolve the Mystery; but we can help people see where Life is to be found. If the Mystery goes, the Meaning goes too. So biblical criticism and exegesis may at first shock; but we ought to remember that Jesus in His teachings and life was constantly shocking everybody. He must have believed that it was the way to get through to others. It was when their defenses were broken down for the moment that truth and love stood revealed, or a decision for or against Him was made. The faithful preacher will read widely in present-day biblical criticism (Moltmann's *The Crucified God*, Jeremias' *New Testament Theology*, Herzog's *Liberation Theology*, Eichrodt's *Old Testament, et al.*). Recently I used John Knox' little commentary, *Romans 5-8*, with a group of lay people. Their reactions were so fresh, and their discussion so free about law and grace. They gave me fresh ammunition for a series of sermons on Romans, which I think became existential for all of us.

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Once in a while, with a very familiar portion of scripture, you might find it helpful to have a series of questions prepared; and after the scripture is read, have people discuss for five or ten minutes with their neighbors in the pews the questions you have suggested. I've done this with the Lord's Prayer to good effect. First it was read from both Matthew and Luke in *Good News For Modern Man*. Then for two Sundays I preached on it: (1) "The Lord's Prayer—Its Form;" (2)

“What’s New In the Prayer?” For the first sermon I had mimeographed these questions for discussion:

- Why do you think there are two versions of the Prayer?
- Which one do you think is earlier?
- Matthew sets the prayer as part of the Sermon on the Mount; Luke says that the prayer was a result of the disciples’ watching Jesus pray. Does this tell us anything about the purpose of each Gospel?
- Underline words that appear in one version that are not in the other version.

For the second sermon I gave these questions for pew-discussion:

- Why do you think Matthew adds to “Our Father” the words “in heaven?”
- Does the prayer mean that God forgives as (in the same manner) we forgive (if we forgive, God forgives?)
- Does God lead us into temptation, or “bring us to hard testing?”

One must remember, of course, that the sermon is not a lecture, a handing out of information. It is, hopefully, proclamation and revelation. But with this kind of preparation (before or during the service), I found that the sermons themselves became a form of prayer.

\* \* \* \*

I have spoken above, in connection with the Exodus, about the nature of miracles. They are not to be thought of as interventions of natural law, but the *use* of natural law and divine power for love’s sake. When I transplant a tree in my garden, I break no laws of nature: I use them. Yet it is a miracle; for the balance of nature is changed, yet I do nothing to veto its purposes. Paul Tillich has been helpful for me when he said that providence does not mean a divine plan by which everything is predetermined as in an efficient machine. Rather, providence means that there is a creative and saving possibility implied in every situation which cannot be destroyed by any event.

That, I take it, is what the miracles of Jesus mean. They are signs, say the Gospels, which foretell what God will some day do universally. They are parables of the new creation. They say, “Not yet . . . but as sure as heaven. . . .” God, for instance, raised Jesus from the dead as promise (or warning, depending on your point of view) of a time when He will raise all of us from the dead. Jesus walking on the water is symbolic of an era when all who walk with God will have effortless power over matter, sustained by a new force driving through and beyond the natural. The man born blind has his eyesight restored to demonstrate that some day all people will see the world in its pristine glory, restored to what it was before evil marred and scarred it. In a computerized age we think everything can be predicted and plotted. But

there are X-Factors, serendipities, which enter in and change history from its predictable and patterned way. Jesus is the One who assures us that we are to live as if the future has already broken in—as, indeed, it has in Him.

This leads me to suggest that central to the Christian Faith is Jesus' Resurrection. But when preaching about it, the text behind any text we use is, "He appeared also to me" (I Cor. 15). The Resurrection is not confined to talk about "then" but is now, any more than it is confined to talk about life in the world-to-come but to the new quality of life here. So it would seem to me that we have to speak about Event and Interpretation here more than anywhere. The interpretations talk about an empty tomb, a revived corpse, bodily ascension and other "proofs." The Gospels give variations on the theme without trying to "justify" them. Even if all the signatures on the innumerable Howard Hughes' wills were to match in every detail, we'd know that all but one (or all for that matter) were forgeries. So the stories should vary; but it's not the description and explanation that matter; it's the Fact.

The resurrection quite obviously was not a public event. Caiaphas and Herod did not "see" Him. The public generally did not meet Him. His coming again was in a form that only those whom He had prepared recognized. Most important is what the resurrection says about our world. Jesus' way has backing in the eternal nature of things. The foundations of the world are laid bare. The way of the Cross is God's way; and to take up one's cross and enter into His sufferings is to know the power of His resurrection. It's the ethical aspects revealed through His love-death that are certified, underscored, and made triumphant in what we call "the Resurrection of Jesus." Faith is not dependent upon our explanations but upon the promise the resurrection makes to us "in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which we shall pass through in His fellowship; and, as an ineffable mystery, we shall learn in our own experience Who He is," as Albert Schweitzer says on the last page of his *Quest for the Historical Jesus*.

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If there were more time, I would stress at greater length the importance of the God-search in the modern novel. Elie Wiesel in *Night*, Frederick Buechner in *Love Feast*, John Updike in *A Month of Sundays*, Flannery O'Connor and William Faulkner: these and others are testaments of the God-hunger, the God-search, the God incarnate in our fellows. Kurt Vonnegut in *Mother Night* tells the story of an American living in Berlin when war broke out. He became an announcer for overseas broadcasts to America and an apologist (like Tokyo Rose) for Hitler propaganda. As the story opens, the announcer has returned to America to meet the invectives and hatred of his fellow Americans. Unknown to them, however, he had been a secret agent of our government, sending through his broadcasts coded messages to our State

Department. But he is unable to explain to them what his real purpose was; it is still "top secret." Actually he could not completely put together his own motives for why he had remained in Berlin or for some of his actions now. So he is tried in Jerusalem along with Eichmann, and is sentenced to death. He accepts this fate because deep within he has a sense of guilt, a homesickness, that cannot be talked away. But then the head of the Secret Intelligence in Washington flies to Jerusalem to vouch for him. It is no mere "happy ending" but profound truth: If we are to be healed, then we need Another to vouch for us. And there comes One who never avoided controversy, took risks beyond our understanding, and in His necessity we find our peace and health. So the modern novelist seeks to contemporize the sacrificial and questioning nature of Life claiming our obedience.

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I am aware that this article is couched in Christo-centric language. This is my existential situation and I can do no other. But if you are a Jew or a Unitarian, I think the main thrust I have been trying to make will still hold. Get beneath the surface; tease the text; converse with Scripture; be honest—and above all, try to be existential in your proclamation of the Word. Ask, 'Is this fresh and new and alive—first for me; and then for my people? Is it Good Advice or Good News?'



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